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A

TREATISE

ON

MAN,

HIS

INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES

AND HIS

EDUCATION.

A Posthumous Work of

M. HELVETIUS.

Honteux de m'ignorer,
Dans mon être, dans moi, je cherche à pénétrer.
VOLTAIRE, Disc. VI. de la Nat. de l'Homme.

Translated from the FRENCH, with additional Notes,

By W. HOOPER, M. D.

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MCCLXXVII.

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PREFACE.

MY inducement to engage in the following work, was merely the love of mankind and of truth; from a perſuaſion, that to become virtuous and happy, we wanted only to know ourſelves, and entertain juſt ideas of morals.

My deſign can hardly be miſtaken. Had I publiſhed this book in my life-time, I ſhould, in all probability, have expoſed myſelf to perſecution, without the proſpect of any perſonal advantage.

That I have continued to maintain the ſame ſentiments which I advanced in my Treatiſe on the Underſtanding, is the conſequence of their appearing to me the only rational principles on the ſubject, and of their

being generally adopted, ſince that time, by men of the greateſt learning and abilities.

Thoſe principles are farther extended, and more accurately examined, in the preſent work than in the former; my reflections having ſuggeſted a number of new ideas, while I was employed in the compoſition. Such thoughts as are leſs intimately connected with the ſubject, are thrown into notes, at the end of each ſection; thoſe only being retained in the text, which were of an explanatory nature, or ſerved to remove objections, which could not be directly anſwered, without greatly encreaſing the limits, and retarding the progreſs of the work.

The ſecond is the moſt encumbered with notes, becauſe the principles it contains being chiefly controvertible, required the ſupport of a greater accumulation of proof.

It is not improper on this occaſion to obſerve, that there are ſeveral reaſons which may render a work contemptible in the opinion of the public; ſuch as, that the author has not taken ſufficient pains to merit approbation;

bation; that he is defective in abilities, or chargeable with diſingenuity. I can ſafely affirm, that I have nothing with which to reproach myſelf on the latter of thoſe heads. It is only in prohibited publications that truth is now to be found; for in others, falſehood is diſcernible. The greater number of authors is in their writings, what men of the world are in their converſation: ſolicitous only to pleaſe, they are wholly indifferent, provided they attain their purpoſe, whether it be by means of falſity or truth.

A writer who is deſirous of the favour of the great, and the tranſitory applauſe of the preſent hour, muſt adopt implicitly the current principles of the time, without ever attempting to examine or queſtion their authority; and from this ſource ariſes the want of originality, ſo general among literary productions. Books of intrinſic merit, and which diſcover real genius, are the phænomena but of very few periods in the ſpace of many ages; and their appearance, like that of the ſun in the foreſt, ſerves only to render the intervening darkneſs more conſpicuous. They conſtitute an epoch in the

hiſtory of the human underſtanding and it is from the principles they contain, that future improvements in ſcience derive their origin.

It would ill become me to ſay any thing in praiſe of this work; I ſhall, therefore, only obſerve, in reſpect to its principles, that I have advanced no ſentiment which was not ſuggeſted by my own reflection, nor affirmed any propoſition which I do not believe to be true.

In expoſing ſome prejudices, I may be thought, perhaps, to have conducted myſelf with too little reſerve. I have treated them with the ſame ingenuous freedom, which a young man is apt to uſe towards an old woman, whom he is under no inducement either to flatter or depreciate. Through the whole inquiry, truth has been my principal object; and this conſideration, it is to be hoped, will ſtamp ſome value on the work. A ſincere love of truth is the diſpoſition moſt favourable for diſcovering her.

I have all along endeavoured to expreſs my ideas with perſpicuity; nor ever ſacrificed any ſen-

ſentiment to popular prepoſſeſſion. If, therefore, the book be void of merit, it ought to be imputed to the fault of my judgment, and not to a depravity of heart. It is few, I believe, that can with juſtice ſay ſo much in their own favour.

To ſome readers this work will appear to be written with great boldneſs. There are periods in every country when the word *prudent* bears the ſame ſignification with *vile*; and when thoſe productions only are eſteemed for their ſentiments, which are written in a ſtyle of ſervility.

It was once my intention to have publiſhed this book under a fictitious name, as the only means of reconciling with my own ſafety the deſire I entertained of rendering ſervice to my country. But, during the time I have been employed in the work, a change has happened in the circumſtances and government of my fellow-citizens. The diſorder, which I hoped in ſome meaſure to remedy, is become incurable: the proſpect of public utility is vaniſhed, and I defer the publication of the work, till its author be no more.

My country has at length ſubmitted to the yoke of deſpotiſm. She will never again produce any writer of extraordinary eminence. It is the characteriſtic of deſpotic power to extinguiſh both genius and virtue.

The people of this country will never more ſignalize themſelves under the appellation of French: the nation is now ſo much debaſed as to become the contempt of Europe. No fortunate criſis can henceforth ever reſtore her liberty. She will die of the conſumption. Conqueſt alone can afford a remedy proportioned to the virulence of her diſeaſe; and the efficacy even of this, it is chance and circumſtances which muſt determine.

In all nations there are certain periods when the citizens, undetermined what meaſures they ought to take, and remaining in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe between a good and bad government, are extremely deſirous of inſtruction, and diſpoſed to receive it. At ſuch a time, if a work of great merit makes its appearance, the happieſt effects may be produced; but the moment once paſt, the people, inſenſible to glory, are, by the form of

their

their government, irreſiſtibly inclined towards ignorance and baſeneſs. Their minds are then like parched earth; the water of truth may rain upon them, but without producing fertility. Such is the ſtate of France.

Henceforth, among the French, the eſtimation of learning will daily decline, with its utility; as it can only ſerve to ſhew in a ſtronger light the miſery of deſpotiſm, without ſupplying the means of evading it.

Happineſs, like the ſciences, is ſaid to advance progreſſively over the world. Its courſe is now directed towards the North. There great princes cheriſh the ſeeds of genius, and genius is ever accompanied with a high degree of public felicity.

Nothing can be more oppoſite than the ſtate of the ſouth and north parts of Europe at preſent to each other. Clouds of thicker darkneſs are perpetually overſpreading the South, produced by the miſts of ſuperſtition and of Aſiatic deſpotiſm. The horizon of the North becomes every day more bright and effulgent. A Catharine II. and a Frederick,

render themſelves dear to humanity. Convinced in their own minds of the value of truth, they encourage the cultivation of it in others, and afford their patronage to every effort by which it may be farther inveſtigated. It is to ſuch ſovereigns that I dedicate this work: it is by the auſpicious influence of thoſe that the world can be enlightened.

The former brightneſs of the South becomes more dim, while the dawn of the North ſhines forth with increaſing radiance. It is the North that now emits the rays which penetrate even to Auſtria. Every thing there haſtens towards an extraordinary change. The aſſiduous application beſtowed by the emperor on alleviating the weight of the impoſts, and improving the diſcipline of his army, ſhews plainly that he entertains a deſire of becoming the darling of his ſubjects; that he wiſhes to render them happy at home, and reſpectable to foreign nations. The eſteem for the king of Pruſſia, profeſſed from his earlieſt years, afforded a preſage of his future virtues! Eſteem always indicates a ſimilarity of diſpoſition to the object of it.

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ON

ON MAN; HIS INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES AND HIS EDUDATION.

CHAP. I.

Of the different points of view from which we may conſider man: of the influence of education.

THE ſcience of man, taken in its utmoſt extent, is immenſe; the ſtudy of it is long and painful. Man is a model expoſed to the view of different artiſts; every one ſurveys it from ſome point of view, no one from every point.

The painter and the muſician conſider man; but merely with regard to the effect that colours and ſounds have on his eyes and his ears.

Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire have ſtudied him, but only in relation to the impreſſions that

are excited in him by actions of greatneſs, tenderneſs, pity, rage, &c.

Moliere and Fontaine have conſidered mankind from other points of view.

In the ſtudy that the philoſopher makes of men, his object is their happineſs. This happineſs is dependent on the laws under which they live, and the inſtructions they receive.

The perfection of theſe laws and inſtructions ſuppoſes a preliminary knowledge of the human heart and mind, with their various operations; in a word, of the obſtacles to the progreſs of the ſciences of morality, politics, and education.

Without this knowledge, what means are there to render men better and happier? The philoſopher ſhould, therefore, remount to the ſimple and productive principle of their intellectual faculties and their paſſions, the only principle that can inform him of the degree of perfection to which laws and inſtructions can carry them, and ſhew him what is the power of education over them.

I regard the underſtanding, the virtue, and genius of man, as the product of inſtruction. This idea preſented in the Treatiſe of L'Eſprit appears to me invariably true; but perhaps it is not ſufficiently proved. It is granted me, that education has more influence over the genius and character of men, and of nations, than was imagined; and this is all that has been granted me.

The

The examination of this opinion will make the firſt part of this work. To educate mankind, furniſh their minds, and render them happy, we muſt know of what inſtructions and what happineſs they are ſuſceptible.

Previous to the entering on this inquiry, I ſhall ſay a few words.

1. On the importance of this queſtion.

2. On falſe ſcience, to which is alſo given the name of education.

3. On the dryneſs of the ſubject, and the difficulty of treating it.

CHAP. II.

Of the importance of this queſtion.

IF it be true that the talents and the virtues of a people determine their power and their happineſs, no queſtion can be more important than this, to wit,

If in each individual his talents and his virtues be the effect of his organiſation, or of the education he receives.

I am of the latter opinion, and propoſe to prove here what perhaps is only advanced in the treatiſe of L'Eſprit. If I can demonſtrate that man is, in fact, nothing more than the product of his education, I ſhall doubtleſs reveal an important truth to mankind. They will learn, that they

have in their own hands the inſtrument of their greatneſs and their felicity, and that to be happy and powerful nothing more is requiſite than to perfect the ſcience of education.

But by what means ſhall we diſcover whither man be in fact the produce of his education? By a thorough diſcuſſion of the queſtion. If this examination ſhould not give the ſolution, we ought ſtill make it; for it will be uſeful, as it will compel us to the ſtudy of ourſelves.

Mankind are, but too often, unknown to him that governs them; yet to guide the motions of the human puppet, it is neceſſary to know the wires by which he is moved. Without this knowledge, what wonder is it that his motions are frequently ſo contrary to thoſe the legiſlature requires.

If ſome errors ſhould creep into a work that treats on man, it will ſtill be a valuable work.

What a maſs of light does the knowledge of mankind throw upon the ſeveral parts of government. The ability of the groom conſiſts in knowing all that is to be done to the animal he is to manage; and the ability of a miniſter, in knowing all that is to be done in the management of the people he is to govern.

The ſcience of man makes a part of the ſcience of government. (1) The miniſter ſhould connect it with that of public affairs. (2) It is then that he will eſtabliſh juſt laws.

Let

Let philoſophers therefore penetrate continually more and more into the abyſs of the human heart, let them there ſearch out all the principles of his actions, and let the miniſter, profiting by their diſcoveries, make of them, according to time, place, and circumſtances, a happy application.

If the knowledge of mankind be regarded as abſolutely neceſſary to the legiſlature, nothing can be more important than the examination of a problem which implies that knowledge.

If they who are perſonally indifferent to this queſtion, ſhall judge of it only as relative to public intereſt, they will perceive that of all the obſtacles to the perfection of education, the greateſt is to regard our talents and virtues as the effect of organiſation. No opinion is more favourable to the idleneſs and negligence of inſtructors. If organiſation make us almoſt entirely what we are, why do we reproach the maſter with the ignorance and ſtupidity of his pupils? Why, he will ſay, do you impute to education the faults of nature? What anſwer will you make him? When you admit a principle, how can you deny its immediate conſequence?

On the contrary, if we prove that talents and virtues are acquiſitions, we ſhall rouſe the induſtry of the maſter, and prevent his negligence; we ſhall render him more aſſiduous in ſtifling

the vices, and cultivating the virtues of his pupils.

The genius moſt ardent in carrying the inſtruments of education to perfection, will perceive perhaps in an infinity of thoſe minute articles, now regarded as inſignificant, the hidden ſeeds of our vices, our virtues, our talents, and imbecilities; and who can ſay to what point genius may then carry its diſcoveries? (3) Of this we are certain, that we are as yet ignorant of the true principles of education, and that it is at the preſent day reduced almoſt entirely to certain falſe ſciences, to which even ignorance is preferable.

CHAP. III.

Of falſe ſcience, or acquired ignorance.

MAN is born ignorant; he is not born a fot; and it is not even without labour that he is made one. To be ſuch, and to be able to extinguiſh in himſelf his natural lights, art and method muſt be uſed; inſtruction muſt heap on him error upon error; he muſt have multiplied his prejudices by a multitude of lectures.

If ſottiſm be the common condition of mankind among the poliſhed nations, it is the effect of a contagious

gious inſtruction; it is becauſe they are educated by men of falſe ſcience, and read ſottiſh books; for it is with books as with men, there is good and bad company. The good book is almoſt every where prohibited (4) Senſe and ſpirit urge its publication; bigotry forbids, for bigotry would command the world; ſhe is, therefore, intereſted in the propagation of folly. Her aim is to blind mankind, and bewilder them in a labyrinth of of falſe ſcience. It is not enough that men be ignorant; ignorance is the middle point between true and falſe learning. The ignorant man is as much above the falſely learned, as he is below him of real ſcience. The deſire of superſtition is to render man ſtupid; her fear is that he become enlightened. Now to whom will ſhe commit the care of making him a brute? To the ſcholaſtics, for of all the ſons of Adam they are the moſt ſtupid and conceited (5). "The mere "ſchool divine, according to Rabelais, holds the "ſame rank among men as that animal does "among beaſts, who neither labours like the ox, "nor bears a burden like the mule, nor barks at "the thief like a dog, but like the ape, ſoils "all, breaks all, bites the paſſenger, and is "noxious to every one."

The ſcholaſtic is powerful in words, and weak in argument, therefore, what ſort of men does he form? Such as are learnedly abſurd and ſtupidly proud (6). With regard to ſtupidity, I

have already ſaid it is of two ſorts, one natural, the other acquired; the one the effect of ignorance, the other of inſtruction. Now of theſe two ſorts of ignorance or ſtupidity, which is the moſt incurable? The latter. The man who knows nothing may learn; it is only requiſite to excite in him the deſire of knowledge. But he who is falſely learned, and has by degrees loſt his reaſon when he thought to improve it, has purchaſed his ſtupidity at too dear a rate ever to renounce it *. His mind overloaded with the weight of a learned ignorance, can never mount up to the truth; it has loſt the ſpring that ſhould raiſe it up. The knowledge he muſt acquire is connected with that he muſt forget. To place a certain number of truths in his memory, it is frequently neceſſary to diſplace the ſame number of errors. Now this diſplacement requires time, and if be at laſt effected, the man is formed too late.

We are aſtoniſhed at the age the Greeks and Romans acquired maturity. What various talents did they diſplay in their adoleſcence? At twenty, Alexander, already a man of letters and a great general, undertook the conqueſt of the Eaſt. At the ſame age Scipio and Hannibal formed the greateſt projects, and executed the

* A young painter having drawn a figure in the bad manner of his maſter, ſhewed it to Raphael, and aſked what he thought of it? I think, ſays Raphael, if you knew nothing, you would ſoon know ſomething.

moſt difficult enterpriſes. Before the age of maturity Pompey, the conqueror of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, had filled the earth with his glory. Now how did theſe Greeks and Romans become at once men of letters, orators, generals, and miniſters of ſtate? How did they qualify themſelves for all ſorts of employments in their republics, exerciſe them, and even frequently abdicate them, at an age when no one in our days is capable of aſſuming them? Were the men of antiquity different from the moderns? Was their organiſation more perfect? No doubtleſs. For in the ſciences, and the arts of navigation, phyſics, mechanics, the mathematics, &c. we know that the moderns excel the ancients.

The ſuperiority the latter have for ſo long a time preſerved in morality, politics, and legiſlation, is therefore to be regarded as the effect of their education. The inſtruction of youth was not then confided to ſcholaſtics, but philoſophers. The object of theſe philoſophers was to form heroes and great politicians. The glory of the pupil was reflected on the maſter; that was his reward.

The object of an inſtructor is no longer the ſame. What intereſt has he in exalting the mind and ſoul of his pupil? None. What is his aim? To weaken their natural abilities, to make them ſuperſtitious; to diſjoint, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, the wings of their genius; to ſtifle in

their minds all true ſcience, and in their hearts every patriotic virtue (7).

The golden ages of theſe ſchool divines were the ages of ignorance, whoſe darkneſs, before Luther and Calvin, covered the earth. Then, ſays an Engliſh philoſopher, ſuperſtition reigned over all nations, "Men were changed, like Nabuchadnez-"zer, into brutes, and being like mules, bridled "ſaddled, and loaded with heavy burdens, they "groaned under the weight of ſuperſtition; but "at laſt ſome of theſe mules began to kick, and "throw off at once their loads and their riders."

No reformation can be hoped in the plan of inſtructions ſo long as it is confided to the ſcholaſtics. Under ſuch tutors the ſcience taught will never be any thing more than the ſcience of errors; and the ancients will preſerve that ſuperiority over the moderns in morality, politics, and legiſlation, which they owe not to the ſuperiority of their organiſation, but, as I have already ſaid, to that of their inſtruction.

I have now ſhewn the futility of falſe learning, and have evinced the importance of this work. It remains to ſpeak of the dryneſs of the ſubject.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the dryneſs of the ſubject, and the difficulty of treating it.

THE examination of the queſtion I have propoſed requires a refined and deep diſcuſſion. Every diſcuſſion of this ſort is tireſome.

That a man who is a real friend to humanity, and already habituated to the fatigue of attention, ſhould read this book without diſguſt, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed, and his approbation would doubtleſs content me, if from the beginning, to render this work uſeful, I had not propoſed to make it entertaining. Now what flowers can be thrown on a queſtion ſo ſerious and important. I would inſtruct the man of common capacity, and in almoſt every nation men of this ſort are incapable of attention: from hence proceeds diſguſt; and it is in France eſpecially that this ſort of men are the moſt common.

I paſt ten years at Paris; the ſpirit of bigotry and fanaticiſm reigned then not there. If I may believe the public report, it is now the ſpirit of the times. With regard to people of faſhion, they are more and more indifferent to works of reflection. Nothing affects them but a ridiculous deſcription (8), which ſatisfies their malignity without diſturbing their indolence. I renounce, therefore,

the

the hope of pleaſing them. Whatever pains I might take, I ſhould never diffuſe ſufficient entertainment over a ſubject ſo dry and ſerious.

I have obſerved, however, that if we judge of the French nation by their works, either the people are leſs light and frivolous (9) than they are thought to be, or the ſpirit of the men of letters is very different from that of the nation. The ideas of the latter appear to me grand and elevated; let them, therefore, write on, and reſt aſſured, notwithſtanding national partialities, that they will every where find juſt judges of their merit. I have only one thing to adviſe them, and that is, ſometimes to dare to deſpiſe the opinion of a ſingle nation, and to remember, that a mind truly great will attach itſelf to ſuch ſubjects only as are intereſting to the whole race of mankind.

This of which I here treat is of that nature. I ſhall only repeat the principles in the treatiſe of L'Eſprit, to examine them more thoroughly, to preſent them in a new point of view, and to draw new conſequences from them.

In geometry every problem not fully reſolved, may become the object of a new demonſtration. It is the ſame in morality and politics.

Let no one therefore decline the examination of a queſtion ſo important, and whoſe ſolution moreover requires the expoſition of truths hitherto but little known.

Is the difference in the minds of men the effect of their different organisations or education? That is the object of my inquiry.

SECTION I.

The education necessarily different in different men, is perhaps the cause of that inequality in understandings hitherto attributed to the unequal perfection of their organs.

CHAP. I.

No two persons receive the same education.

I Still learn; my instruction is not yet finished: When will it be? When I shall be no longer sensible; at my death. The course of my life is properly nothing more than a long course of education.

What is necessary that two individuals should receive precisely the same education? That they should be in precisely the same positions, and the same circumstances. Now such an hypothesis is impossible: it is therefore evident, that no two persons can receive the same instructions.

But why put off the term of our education to the utmost period of life? Why not confine it to the time expressly set apart for instruction, that is, to the period of infancy and adolescence?

I am

I am content to confine it to that period; and I will prove in like manner, that it is impoſſible for two men to acquire preciſely the ſame ideas.

CHAP. II.

Of the moment at which education begins.

IT is at the very inſtant a child receives motion and life that it receives its firſt inſtruction: it is ſometimes even in the womb where it is conceived, that it learns to diſtinguiſh between ſickneſs and health. The mother however delivered, the child ſtruggles and cries; hunger gripes it, it feels a want, and that want opens its lips, makes it ſieze, and greedily ſuck the nouriſhing breaſt. When ſome months have paſſed, its ſight is diſtinct, its organs are fortified, it becomes by degrees ſuſceptible of all impreſſions; then the ſenſes of ſeeing, hearing, taſting, touching, ſmelling, in a word, all the inlets to the mind are ſet open; then all the objects of nature ruſh thither in crowds, and engrave an infinity of ideas in the memory *. In theſe firſt moments what can be true inſtructors of infancy? The divers ſenſations it feels: theſe are ſo many inſtructions it receives.

* See Mr. Buffon's eloquent and admirable diſcourſes on man.

If two children have the ſame preceptor, if they are taught to diſtinguiſh their letters, to read and repeat their catechiſm, &c. they are ſuppoſed to receive the ſame education. The philoſopher judges otherwiſe: according to him, the true preceptors of a child are the objects that ſurround him; theſe are the inſtructors to whom he owes almoſt all his ideas.

CHAP. III.

Of the inſtructors of childhood.

A Short hiſtory of the infancy of man will bring us acquainted with them. He no ſooner ſees the light than a thouſand [illegible] like his ears; he hears nothing but a confuſed noiſe; a thouſand bodies offer themſelves to his ſight, but preſent nothing but objects imperfectly defined. It is by inſenſible degrees the infant learns to hear and ſee, to perceive and rectify the errors of one ſenſe by another *.

Being conſtantly ſtruck by the ſame ſenſations in the preſence of the ſame objects, he thereby

* The ſenſes never deceive us; objects conſtantly make the impreſſions on us they ought to make. If a ſquare tower appears round at a certain diſtance, it is becauſe at that diſtance the rays reflected from the tower ought to be confounded, and make it appear as it does; it is becauſe there are certain caſes in which the real forms of bodies cannot be aſcertained without the united teſtimony of ſeveral ſenſes.

acquires

acquires a more complete remembrance of them, in proportion as the ſame action of the objects are repeated on him; and this action of them we ſhould regard as the moſt conſiderable part of his education.

The child in the mean time grows; he walks and walks alone; numberleſs falls then teach him to preſerve the equilibrium of his body, and to ſtand firm on his legs; the more painful the falls, the more inſtructive they prove, and the more adroit, attentive, and cautious he walks.

The child grows ſtrong; he runs, he is already able to leap the little canals that traverſe and water the garden. It is then that by repeated trials and falls he learns to proportion his leaps to the width of the canals.

He ſees a ſtone fall into the water and ſink to the bottom, while a piece of wood floats on the ſurface: by this inſtance he acquires the firſt idea of gravity.

If he take the ſtone and the wood out of the water, and by chance they both fall on his feet, the unequal degree of pain occaſioned by their fall, engraves more ſtrongly on his memory the idea of their unequal weight and hardneſs.

If he chance to throw the ſame ſtone againſt one of the flower-pots placed on the border of a canal, he will then learn that ſome bodies are broke by a blow that others reſiſt.

There

There is therefore no man of diſcernment who muſt not ſee in all objects, ſo many tutors charged with the education of our infancy *.

But are not theſe inſtructors the ſame for all? No. The chance is not preciſely the ſame for any two perſons; but ſuppoſe it were, and that two children owed their dexterity in walking, running, and leaping to their falls; I ſay, that as it is impoſſible they ſhould both have preciſely the ſame number of falls, and equally painful, chance cannot furniſh them both with the ſame inſtructions.

Place two children, [illegible], in a wood, a theatre, an aſſembly [illegible]od. They will not, by their mere natural [illegible]ection, be ſtruck preciſely in the ſame manner, i.e. conſequently affected with the ſame ſenſations. What different ſubjects moreover are by daily occurrences inceſſantly offered to the view of theſe two children.

Two brothers travel with their parents, and to arrive at their native place they muſt traverſe long chains of mountains. The eldeſt follows his father by the ſhort and rugged road. What

* If I have here deſcribed the ſeveral ſtates of infancy in a curſory manner, it is becauſe I am fearful of tiring the reader. What imports him to know the time the child is in paſſing through the ſeveral periods? It is ſufficient that they are paſſed through. It is by no means neceſſary that my narration ſhould be as long as the infancy of man.

does he ſee? Nature in all the forms of horror; mountains of ice that hide their heads among the clouds, maſſy rocks that hang over the traveller's head, fathomleſs caverns, and ridges of arid hills, from whence torrents precipitate with a tremenduous roar. The younger follows his mother through the moſt frequented roads, where nature appears in all her pleaſing forms. What objects does he behold? Every where hills planted with vines and fruitful trees, and vallies where the wandering ſtreams divide the meadows, people[illegible] browzing herds.

Theſe two brothers, [illegible] in the ſame journey, ſeen very differe[illegible] and received very different impreſſi[illegible] a thouſand incidents of the ſame nature may produce the ſame effects. Our life is nothing more, ſo to ſay, than a long chain of ſimilar incidents; let men not ever flatter themſelves, therefore, with being able to give two children preciſely the ſame education.

What influence moreover may a difference in inſtruction, occaſioned by a trifling difference in ſurrounding objects, have on the mind? Who does not know that a ſmall number of diſſimilar ideas, combined with thoſe two men already have in common, can produce a total difference in their manner of ſeeing and judging?

Suppoſing, however, that chance ſhould conſtantly offer the ſame objects to two perſons, does it preſent them when their minds are preciſely in the

the ſame ſituation, and when conſequently thoſe objects will make the ſame impreſſions on them?

CHAP. IV.

Of the different impreſſions objects make on us.

THAT different objects produce different ſenſations is ſelf-evident. Experience, moreover, teaches us that the ſame objects excite in us different impreſſions, according to the moment at which they preſent themſelves; and it is, perhaps, to theſe different impreſſions, that we are principally to attribute the diverſity and great inequality that is to be found in men educated in the ſame country, in the ſame habits and manners, and who have moreover the ſame objects before their eyes.

There are in the mind certain moments of perfect repoſe, when its ſurface is not agitated by the leaſt breath of paſſion. The objects that then preſent themſelves ſometimes engage our whole attention; we examine more at leiſure their different appearances, and the impreſſions they make on our memory are much more complete and durable.

Occurrences of this ſort are very common, eſpecially in early youth. A child commits a fault, and for puniſhment is ſhut up by himſelf

in a chamber. What does he do? He ſees in the window ſome pots with flowers, he plucks ſome of them, he conſiders their colours, and remarks their ſhades; his idle ſituation ſeems to give an additional diſcernment to his ſight. It is then with the child as with the blind; if the latter have commonly the ſenſes of hearing and feeling more keen than other men, it is becauſe he is not like them diſturbed by the action of the light upon his eyes, becauſe he is the more attentive, and more concentered within himſelf; and, laſtly, to ſupply the ſenſe he wants, he is, as M. Diderot remarks, more intereſted to improve thoſe ſenſes that remain.

The impreſſions that objects make on us depend principally on the moment at which thoſe objects ſtrike us. In the example juſt mentioned, it is the attention that the child is, ſo to ſay, forced to give to the only objects that are expoſed to his ſight, which makes him diſcover in the colours and form of the flowers, thoſe nice differences that a diſtracted view, or a ſuperficial glance would not have permitted him to obſer. It is thus that a puniſhment, or ſome ſimilar incident, frequently determines the taſte of a young man, and makes him a painter of flowers; by firſt giving him ſome knowledge of their beauty, and then a love for thoſe pictures that repreſent them. Now to how many like incidents is the education of youth liable? and how can we imagine

them

them to be the ſame in any two indvividuals? How many other cauſes, moreover, prevent two children, whether at home or at college, from receiving the ſame education?

CHAP. V.

Of a collegiate education.

CHILDREN that have been brought up in the ſame college, are ſuppoſed to have received the ſame education. But at what age do they enter the college? At ſeven or eight years. Now at that age they have already charged their memories with ideas, which being partly owing to chance, and partly acquired in the parental abode, ariſe from the ſtate, the character, the fortune, and wealth of their parents. Can we then be ſurpriſed that children entering a college with ideas frequently ſo different, ſhould diſcover more or leſs ardour for ſtudy, more or leſs taſte for certain branches of ſcience; and that the ideas they have already acquired being united with thoſe they receive in common in the ſchools, ſhould produce in them a conſiderable alteration? From ideas thus altered, and combining again among themſelves, muſt frequently ariſe unexpected productions. From hence that inequality

in minds, and that diverſity of taſtes obſerved in the pupils of the ſame college *.

Is it the ſame of domeſtic education?

CHAP. VI.

Of domeſtic education.

THIS ſort of education is doubtleſs more uniform; it is more the ſame. Two children are brought up under their parents, have the ſame preceptor, nearly the ſame objects before their eyes; and read the ſame books. The inequality of age is the only difference that appears to have any influence on their inſtruction; would you rendered that ineffectual? Suppoſe then theſe two brothers to be twins? But have they had the ſame nurſe? What does that ſignify? It ſignifies a great deal. How can we doubt the influence of the diſpoſition of the nurſe on the child? At leaſt they made no doubt of it in Greece, as is evident by the conſequence in which the Lacedæmonian nurſes were held.

* I have elſewhere obſerved, that it is to chance, that is to ſay, to what is not taught by a maſter, we owe the greateſt part of our inſtruction. He whoſe knowledge ſhould be confined to the truths he learns from his governor, or his tutor, and to the facts contained in the ſmall number of books that are read in the claſſes, would doubtleſs be the moſt ignorant child in the world.

In

In fact, ſays Plutarch, if the Spartan does not cry even at the breaſt; if he be inſenſible to fear, and already patient under ſufferings, he owes it to his nurſe. In France, where I live, as in Greece, the choice of a nurſe therefore cannot be matter of indifference.

But ſuppoſe the ſame nurſe to have ſuckled theſe twins, and to have brought them up with the ſame care. Is it to be imagined, when returned to their parents, the father and mother will have preciſely the ſame degree of affection for theſe two children? and that the preference imperceptibly given to one of the two, will have no influence on his education?

Suppoſe, moreover, that the father and mother ſhould regard them equally, will it be the ſame with the domeſtics? Will not the tutor have a favourite? and will the fondneſs that he ſhews for one of the two children be long unnoticed by the other? The different paſſions, or patience of the maſter, and the ſoftneſs or ſeverity of his lectures, will they have no effect on the children? In the laſt place, will theſe two twins enjoy the ſame ſtate of health?

In the career of the arts and the ſciences, ſuppoſe them both to ſet off with an equal pace, if the firſt be ſtopped by ſome diſorder, and ſuffer the other to advance too far before him, his ſtudies will become diſguſtful to him. If a child

loſe the hope of pre-eminence, if he be obliged in a certain ſenſe, to acknowledge a number of ſuperiors, he becomes thereby incapable of a vigorous application: even the fear of puniſhment is then ineffectual. This fear cauſes a child to contract a habit of attention, makes him learn to read, and perform all that he is enjoined; but it will not inſpire him with that ardour for ſtudy which is the only pledge of great acquirements. It is emulation that produces genius, and a deſire of becoming illuſtrious that creates talents. It is from the moment when the love of glory fires the breaſt, and takes poſſeſſion of the man, that we are to date the progreſs of his intellectual faculties. I have always thought that the ſcience of education is, perhaps, nothing more than a knowledge of the means of exciting emulation, which may be lighted up or extinguiſhed by a ſingle word. A commendation beſtowed on the care with which a child examines an object, and the exact deſcription he gives of it, has ſometimes been ſufficient to excite in him that ſort of attention to which he has afterwards owed the ſuperiority of his underſtanding. A collegiate, or domeſtic education is therefore never the ſame for any two individuals.

From the education of childhood we will proceed to that of youth. Let not this examen be regarded as ſuperfluous. This ſecond education is the moſt important; mankind have then

other

other inſtructors, with whom it is proper to be acquainted.

It is in youth, moreover, that our taſtes and our talents are formed. This ſecond education, the leaſt uniform, and the moſt abandoned to chance, is, at the ſame time, the moſt proper to confirm the truth of my opinion.

CHAP. VII.

Of the education of youth.

IT is at leaving the college and entering the world that the education of youth begins. It is leſs uniform than that of childhood, but more dependent on chance, and doubtleſs more important. The youth is then attacked by a greater number of ſenſations: all that ſurrounds him ſtrikes him, and ſtrikes him forcibly.

It is at that age when certain paſſions ſpring up, that all the objects of nature agitate and impel him the moſt ſtrongly. It is then that he receives the moſt efficacious inſtruction; it is then that his taſtes and his character are determined; and, laſtly, that being more free, and more himſelf, the paſſions excited in his heart determine his habits, and frequently all the future conduct of his life.

In children the difference of underſtanding and character is not always very obvious. Engaged

gaged in the ſame ſort of ſtudies, ſubject to the ſame diſcipline, and moreover without paſſions, their exterior is ſufficiently ſimilar.

The ſeed, that by ſpringing up, ſhall one day make ſo much difference in their taſtes, is either not yet formed, or at leaſt is yet imperceptible. I compare two children to two men ſitting on a bank, but with their backs to each other. If they riſe up and walk in the direction they ſat, they will inſenſibly become further diſtant, and ſoon loſe ſight of each other, unleſs by again changing their direction, ſome accident make them again approach.

The reſemblance of children in ſchools or colleges is the effect of conſtraint. When they leave the college the conſtraint ceaſes. Then begins, as I have already ſaid, the ſecond education of man; an education the more directed by chance, as youth on entering the world find themſelves in the midſt of a greater number of objects. Now the more the ſurrounding objects are multiplied and diverſified, the leſs can the father or the maſter depend on the reſult of their impreſſion, and the leſs part the one and the other have in the education of a young man.

The new and principal inſtructors of youth are the form of government under which they live, and the manners that form of government gives to a nation.

Maſters

Masters and pupils are all subject to these instructors; these are the principal, but, however, not the only instructors of youth; among these I also reckon the rank a young man holds in the world, his wealth or indigence, the societies with which he is connected *; and, lastly, his friends, his books, and his mistresses. Now it is on chance that depend his opulence, or poverty, and the choice of his society (10), his friends, his books, and his mistresses. It is on chance, therefore, that depends the choice of the principal part of his instructors. It is chance, moreover, that places him in this or that position, excites, extinguishes or modifies his tastes and passions; and that has, consequently, the greatest part in forming his character. The character of a man is the immediate effect of his passions, and his passions are often the immediate effects of his situations.

The most striking characters are sometimes the produce of an infinity of little accidents. It is from an infinity of threads of hemp that the largest cables are formed (11). There is no change that chance cannot produce in the character of a man. But why do these changes almost always

* Does a man search for the company of the learned? Does he live habitually with those of superior abilities? He becomes enlightened. It is to a desire I always had to converse with such men, said to me one day a celebrated author, that I owe my feeble talents.

operate

operate in a manner unperceived by himſelf? Becauſe to perceive them, he muſt have a moſt ſevere and penetrating eye on himſelf. Now pleaſure, idleneſs, ambition, poverty, &c. equally divert him from this obſervation. Every thing turns him away from himſelf. A man has, moreover, ſo much reſpect for himſelf, ſo much veneration for his own conduct, as being the conſequence of ſuch ſagacious and profound reflection, that he can rarely permit himſelf to examine it: pride forbids, and pride is readily obeyed.

Chance has, therefore, a neceſſary and conſiderable influence on our education. The events of life are frequently the produce of the moſt trifling incidents. I know this aſſertion diſguſts our vanity, which conſtantly aſſigns great cauſes to effects that appear to it of great conſequence. To deſtroy the illuſions of pride, I ſhall prove, by the aid of facts, that it is to the moſt trifling incidents the moſt illuſtrious citizens have ſometimes owed their talents. From whence I conclude, that chance acts in a like manner on all mankind, and if its effects on ordinary minds are leſs remarked, it is merely becauſe minds of this ſort are themſelves leſs remarkable.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the chances to which we often owe illuſtrious characters.

FOR my firſt example, I ſhall cite M. Vaucanſon: his pious mother had a ſpiritual director, who lived in a cell, to which the hall where the clock was placed ſerved as an antichamber. The mother paid frequent viſits to this director. Her ſon waited for her in the antichamber: there alone, and having nothing to do, he wept with wearineſs, while his mother wept with repentance. However, as we commonly weep and weary ourſelves as little as poſſible, and as in a ſtate of vacation there are no ſenſations indifferent, young Vaucanſon was ſoon ſtruck with the uniform motion of the pendulum, and deſirous of diſcovering its cauſe. His curioſity was rouſed; he approached the clock caſe, and ſaw, through the crevices, the wheels that turn each other; diſcovered a part of the mechaniſm, and gueſſed at the reſt. He projected a ſimilar machine, which he executed in wood with a knife, and at laſt was able to make a clock more or leſs perfect. Encouraged by this firſt ſucceſs his taſte for mechanics was determined. His talents diſplayed themſelves, and the ſame genius that enabled him

him to make a clock in wood, ſhowed him the poſſibility of forming a ſluting automaton.

A chance of the ſame ſort illumined the genius of Milton. Cromwell died, his ſon ſucceeded him, and was driven out of England. Milton participated his ill-fortune; he loſt the place of ſecretary to the protector, was impriſoned, releaſed, and driven into exile. At laſt he returned, retired to the country, and there, in the leiſure of retreat and diſgrace, he executed the poem which he had projected in his youth, and which has placed him in the rank of the greateſt of men.

If Shakeſpeare had been, like his father, always a dealer in wool; if his imprudence had not obliged him to quit his commerce, and his country; if he had not aſſociated with libertines, and ſtole deer from the park of a nobleman; had not been purſued for the theft, and obliged to take refuge in London; engage in a company of actors; and, at laſt, diſguſted with being an indifferent performer (12), he had not turned author; the prudent Shakeſpeare had never been the celebrated Shakeſpeare; and whatever ability he might have acquired in the trade of wool, his name would never have reflected a luſtre on England.

It was a chance nearly ſimilar that determined the taſte of Moliere for the ſtage. His grandfather loved the theatre and frequently carried him thither. The young man lived in diſſipation;

the

the father obſerving it, aſked in anger, if his ſon was to be made an actor. Would to God, replied the grandfather, he was as good an actor as Montroſe. Thoſe words ſtruck young Moliere; he took a diſguſt to his trade, and France owes its greateſt comic writer to that accidental reply. Moliere, a ſkilful tapeſtry-maker, had never elſe been cited among the great men of his nation.

Corneille loved; he made verſes for his miſtreſs, became a poet, compoſed Melite (13), then Cinna, Rodogune, &c. is the honour of his country, and an object of emulation for poſterity. The diſcrete Corneille had remained lawyer, and compoſed briefs that would have been forgotten with the cauſes he defended. Thus it is, that the devotion of a mother, the death of Cromwell, deer-ſtealing, the exclamation of a woman, and the beauty of a woman, have given five illuſtrious characters to Europe *.

I ſhould never have done if I would enumerate all the writers celebrated for their talents, and who owed thoſe talents to ſimilar incidents †. Many philoſophers adopt my opinion

* It will doubtleſs be ſaid, that ſimilar incidents would not produce ſimilar effects but on men organiſed in a certain manner; I ſhall anſwer this objection in the next ſection.

† *It will not be improper, however, to add here one more inſtance; Newton, in his younger days, was a ſtudent at Cam-*

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on this particular. M. Bonnet * compares with me, genius to a lens, that burns in one point only. Genius, according to us, is but the produce of a ſtrong and concentered attention to any art or ſcience; but from whence does this attention proceed? From a lively taſte we feel for that art or ſcience. Now this taſte is not the mere gift of nature †. Is a man born without ideas? He is born alſo without taſtes. We may, therefore regard them as acquiſitions ariſing from the ſituations in which we are placed ‡. Genius then, is the remote produce of incidents or chances nearly ſimilar to thoſe I have cited (14).

M. Rouſſeau is not of this opinion: he is, however, himſelf an inſtance of the power of chance.

bridge, but during the time of the plague retired into the country: As he was reading under an apple-tree, one of the fruit fell and ſtruck him a ſmart blow on the head. When he obſerved the ſmallneſs of the apple he was ſurpriſed at the force of the ſtroke. This led him to conſider the accelerating [illegible] bodies; from whence he deduced the principles of gravity, and laid the foundation of that philoſophy which will reflect honour on the Engliſh nation, when, perhaps, the names of Creſſy, Agincourt, and Blenheim will be utterly forgotten.

* See his Analytical Eſſay on the Faculties of the Mind.

† If children have ſeldom the taſte we would give them, it is the fault of their inſtructors, and not that of their organiſation.

‡ The only diſpoſition to ſcience a man has at his birth, is the faculty of comparing and combining. In fact, all the operations of his mind are neceſſarily reduced to the obſerving of the relations objects have to him, and among themſelves. In the next ſection I ſhall examine what this faculty is in man.

On entering the world fortune placed him in the train of an ambaſſador. A bickering with that miniſter made him quit the political career, (15), and follow that of the arts and ſciences. His choice lay between eloquence and muſic; equally adapted to ſucceed in both thoſe arts, his taſte remained for ſome time undetermined; a particular ſeries of circumſtances made him at laſt prefer eloquence; a ſeries of another kind would have made him a muſician. Who knows if the favours of a fair chantreſs would not have produced that effect (16). No one at leaſt can affirm, that love could not have made an Orpheus of the French Plato. But what particular incident made M. Rouſſeau enter the career of eloquence? I do not know: that is his ſecret; all that I can ſay is, that in this purſuit his firſt ſucceſs was ſufficient to determine his choice.

The academy of Dijon propoſed a prize for eloquence. It was a whimſical ſubject *; the queſtion was, *Whether the ſciences be more hurtful than uſeful to ſociety?* The only ſtriking manner of treating this queſtion was to take part againſt the ſciences. M. Rouſſeau was ſenſible of this; and made on this ſubject an eloquent diſcourſe, that deſerved and obtained great en-

* He that propoſed this prize probably thought, that the only way to become generally eſtimable with any other, was to prove, that any other is as ignorant as himſelf.

comiums *. This ſucceſs made the remarkable period of his life. From hence aroſe his glory, his misfortunes, and his paradoxes.

Charmed with the beauty of his own diſcourſe, the maxims of the orator (17) ſoon became thoſe of the philoſopher; and from that moment, devoted to the love of paradoxes, nothing was difficult to him. Was it neceſſary to maintain, in order to defend his opinion, that the man abſolutely brutal, without art, without induſtry, and inferior to every known ſavage, is notwithſtanding more virtuous and happy than the poliſhed citizen of London or Amſterdam? he was ready to maintain it.

The dupe of his own eloquence, and content with the title of an orator, he renounced that of a philoſopher, and his errors became the conſequence of his firſt ſucceſs. The leaſt cauſes have often produced the greateſt effects. Chagrined at laſt by contradictions, or perhaps too

* *A man who is maſter of a fine ſtyle, and is well verſed in ſophiſtry, will always ſhine by taking the paradoxical ſide of a queſtion. He that ſhould attempt to prove that we ſee the light of the ſun at mid-day, how juſtly ſoever his arguments were ranged and how beautiful ſoever his language, would have but few readers. Whereas, he that ſhould aſſert we ſee the ſun's light at midnight, and ſupport his aſſertion in a pleaſing language, by ſomething like argument, would have many admirers. For the human mind, though not convinced, is always pleaſed to find the appearance of argument where it has no right to expect any argument at all.*

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fond of ſingularity, M. Rouſſeau quitted Paris and his friends: he retired to Montmorenci (18). He there compoſed and publiſhed his Emelius; and was purſued by envy, ignorance, and hypocriſy. Eſteemed by all Europe for his eloquence, he was perſecuted in France. They applied to him this paſſage, *cruciatur ubi eſt, laudatur ubi non eſt* *. Obliged at laſt to retire to Swiſſerland, and continually more irritated againſt perſecution, he there wrote his famous letter addreſſed to the archbiſhop of Paris. Thus it is that all the ideas of a man, all his glory, and all his misfortunes, are frequently formed into a ſeries by the inviſible power of a firſt event. M. Rouſſeau, therefore, as well as an infinity of illuſtrious men, may be conſidered as one of the chefs d'œuvres of chance.

Let me not be reproached with having ſtopped to conſider the cauſes to which great men have ſo frequently owed their talents; my ſubject obliged me to it. I ſhall not grow tedious by details. I know that the public is fond of great talents, and that the trifling cauſes by which they are produced appears of little conſequence. I ſee with pleaſure a river roll its waves majeſtically through the plain, but it is with labour my imagination mounts to its ſource, to ſee it aſſemble the volume of

* This ſentence is applicable to almoſt every philoſopher whoſe writings have obtained the public eſteem.

waters neceſſary to its courſe. Objects preſent themſelves to us in maſſes; it is with wearineſs we attend to their decompoſition. I cannot perſuade myſelf without difficulty, that the comet which traverſes with ſuch rapidity our mundane ſyſtem, and menaces its ruin, is nothing more than a certain compoſition of inviſible atoms.

In morals, as in phyſics, we are ſtruck by the great alone: we conſtantly aſſign great cauſes to great effects; we would make the ſigns in the zodiac anounce the fall or revolution of empires. Yet how many cruſades have been undertaken or ſuſpended; how many revolutions accompliſhed or prevented; how many wars kindled or extinguiſhed, by the intrigues of a prieſt, a woman, or a miniſter. It is for want of ſecret anecdotes, that we do not every where find the glove of the ducheſs of Marlborough *.

Let what I here ſay of empires be applied to individuals: it will appear in like manner, that their exaltation or diſgrace, their happineſs or miſery, are the produce of a certain ſeries of circumſtances, of an infinity of chances unforeſeen, and is apparently inſignificant. I compare the

* The phyſicians ſay, that a great acrimony in the ſeminal matter was the cauſe of the violent paſſion of Henry VIII. for women. It is therefore to this acrimony England owes the deſtruction of popery. Hiſtory would perhaps degrade its dignity, if it were always to ſearch out in this manner the ſecret cauſes of great events: but it would be far more inſtructive.

little

little incidents that produce the great events of our lives, to the hairy fibres of a root that insinuate insensibly into the clefts of a rock, and there increase that it may one day spring up.

Chance *, therefore has, and always will, have a part in our education, and especially in that of men of genius; therefore, would you increase their number in a nation, observe the means that are used by chance to inspire mankind with a desire of becoming illustrious. This observation made, place them expressly and frequently in the same positions that chance places them but seldom: this is the only way to make them numerous.

The moral education of mankind is now almost entirely abandoned to chance. To render it perfect, the plan must be directed by public utility, and founded on simple and invariable principles; this is the only method to diminish the influence it receives from chance, and to obviate the contradictions that are found, and must necessarily be found, among all the various precepts of modern education.

* I must inform the reader, that by the word Chance, I mean the unknown concatenation of causes proper to produce such or such an effect, and that I never use the word in any other sense.

CHAP. IX.

Of the principal cauſes of the contradictions in the precepts of education.

IN Europe, and eſpecially in the catholic countries, if all the precepts of education are contradictory, it is becauſe public inſtruction is there confided to two powers, whoſe intereſts are oppoſite, and whoſe precepts therefore muſt be different and contradictory:

The one is the ſpiritual power,

The other is the temporal power.

The ſtrength and grandeur of the latter depends on the ſtrength and grandeur of the empire it commands. The real ſtrength of a prince conſiſts in the ſtrength of the nation; when that ceaſes to be reſpected, the prince ceaſes to be powerful. He deſires, and ought to deſire, that his ſubjects be brave, induſtrious, learned, and virtuous. Is it the ſame with the ſpiritual power? No; its intereſt is not the ſame. The power of the prieſt depends on the ſuperſtition and ſtupid credulity of the people. It is of little ſignificance to him that they be learned; the leſs they know the more docile they will be to his dictates. The intereſt of the ſpiritual power is not connected with that of a nation, but with that of a ſect.

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Two nations are at war; what is it to the pope which is the master and which the slave, if the conqueror and conquered are both to be subject to him? If the French sink under the power of the Portuguese; if the house of Braganza mounts the throne of the Bourbons, the pope sees nothing in it but an increase of his authority. What does the sacerdotal power require of a nation? A blind submission, a credulity without bounds, a puerile and contagious fear. Whether the nation renders itself renowned for its talents and patriotic virtues, is what the clergy concern themselves little about. Great talents and great virtues are almost unknown in Spain, Portugal, and in all parts where the spiritual power is most formidable.

Ambition, it is true, is common to both powers, but the means by which it is gratified are very different. To raise itself to the highest point of grandeur, the one must exalt the passions of men, and the other debase them.

If it be to a love of the public good, to justice, to riches, and glory, that the temporal power owes its warriors, its magistrates, its merchants, and men of letters; if it be by the commerce of its towns, the valour of its troops, the equity of its senate, and the genius of its literati, that the prince renders his nation respectable among others, the strong passions directed to the general good then serve as the basis of his grandeur.

The eccleſiaſtic corps, on the contrary, found their grandeur on the deſtruction of thoſe very paſſions. The prieſt is ambitious, but ambition is odious to him in the laity; it thwarts his deſigns. The project of the prieſt is to extinguiſh every deſire in man, to make him diſguſt his wealth and power, and by that diſguſt to appropriate both of them to himſelf (19). Of this we are certain, that the ſyſtem of religion has been conſtantly directed by this plan.

At the time that chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed, what did they preach? *The community of property.* Who offered himſelf as the depoſitary of the goods that were to be in common? The prieſt. Who violated the depoſit, and made himſelf the proprietor? The prieſt. When the rumour of the end of the world was ſpread abroad, by whom was it authenticated? The prieſt. The report was favourable to his deſigns, he hoped, that ſtruck with a panic, mankind would be anxious about one matter only (a matter in reality of importance) that of their ſalvation. Life, they ſaid, is but a paſſage: heaven is our inheritance; why then ſhould we give ourſelves up to earthly pleaſures? If diſcourſes of this kind did not entirely detach the laity from earthly enjoyments, it at leaſt weaned them from the love of their relations, of glory, of the public good, and of their country. Heroes then became rare; and ſovereigns, ſtruck with the hope of mighty poſſeſſions in Heaven, conſented

conſented ſometimes to commit to a prieſt a part of their terreſtial authority. The prieſt ſeized it, and to preſerve it depreciated, true glory and true virtue. It was no longer permitted to honour ſuch characters as Minos, Lycurgus, Codrus, Ariſtides, Timoleon; in a word, the defenders and benefactors of their country. Other models were propoſed, other names were inſcribed in the calendar; and inſtead of the ancient heroes, were ſeen the names of St. Anthony, St. Criſpin, St. Claire, St. Fiacre, St. Francis (20); in ſhort, the names of all thoſe ſolitary wretches, who, dangerous to ſociety by the example of their ſtupid religion, retired to cloiſters and deſerts, there to vegetate and end their uſeleſs days.

By ſuch models the prieſts hoped to accuſtom mankind to regard this life as a ſhort journey. They then hoped that being without deſires for terreſtrial goods, and without friendſhip for thoſe they ſhould meet on their journey, they would become equally indifferent to their own happineſs and that of their poſterity. In fact, if life be nothing more than a baiting-place, why ſhould we be ſo intereſted in the affairs that concern it? A traveller does not repair the walls of an inn where he is to paſs one night only.

To ſecure their grandeur, and ſatisfy their ambition, the ſpiritual and temporal powers muſt, therefore, in every country, employ very different

different means. Charged in common with the inſtruction of the public, they muſt engrave on the hearts and minds of men precepts that are contradictory, and relative to the intereſt that one has in kindling, and the other in extinguiſhing the paſſions *.

That theſe two powers, however, equally preach probity, I allow. But they do not attach the ſame meaning to the word; and modern Rome, under the government of the pope, has not certainly the ſame idea of virtue that the ancient Romans had under the conſulate of the elder Brutus. The aurora of reaſon begins to appear; men now know that the ſame words do not every where convey the ſame ideas. What therefore is now required of an author? That he annex clear ideas to the terms he uſes. The reign of the dark ſcholaſtics may diſappear; the theologians will not perhaps always impoſe on the people and governments. Of this we may reſt aſſured, that they will not at leaſt preſerve their power by the means they have acquired it. Circumſtances have changed with the times: the neceſſity of the paſſions is now confeſſed; it is found, that by their preſervation, that of empires is ſecured. Paſſions are, in effect, ſtrong deſires,

* To attempt to deſtroy the paſſions of men, is to attempt to deſtroy their action. Does the theologian rail at the paſſions? he is the pendulum that mocks its ſpring, and the effect that miſtakes its cauſe.

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and theſe deſires may be either conformable or contrary to the public welfare. If avarice and intolerance be hurtful and criminal paſſions, it is not ſo with the deſire to render ourſelves illuſtrious by talents and patriotic virtues (21). By annihilating the deſires, you annihilate the mind; every man without paſſions has within him no principle of action, nor motive to act.

You are, O catholic clergy! rich and powerful upon the earth, but your power may be deſtroyed with that of the nations you command. By degrading them ſtill more, they may be conquered by others, and will ceaſe to be under your ſubjection. Even your own intereſt requires that men ſhould continue to be excited by paſſions and wants; to ſtifle them in man you muſt change his nature.

O venerable theologians! O brutes! O my brethren! abandon the ridiculous project; ſtudy the human heart, examine the ſprings by which it is moved, and if you have not yet any clear idea of morality and politics (22), forbear to teach them. Pride has led you too long aſtray: remember the ingenious fable of the birth of Momus. The moment he ſaw the day, ſays a great poet, the infant god filled Olympus with his cries; the celeſtial court was ſtuned: to quiet him, each one gave the child a play-thing. Jupiter, who had juſt then created man, gave him to Momus, and ever ſince man has been the puppet

puppet of folly. Now among the puppets of this ſort, the moſt rueful, proud, and ridiculous, is a doctor of divinity (23). O theological puppet! do not perſiſt in deſtroying the paſſions, they are the vital principles of a ſtate (24). Employ yourſelf in promoting the general good; endeavour to trace out a plan of inſtruction, whoſe clear and ſimple principles ſhall all center in the happineſs of the public.

How far diſtant are we from ſuch a plan of inſtruction? Parents and maſters, with little harmony among themſelves, are equally ignorant of what children ought to be taught. Their ideas of education are yet all confuſed, and from thence ariſes that glaring contradiction in all their precepts.

CHAP. X.

Examples of contradictory ideas or precepts inculcated in early youth.

IF, in order to ſhow more ſenſibly the contradiction in all the precepts of our education, I am obliged to deſcend to a more familiar ſtyle, the ſubject will plead my excuſe. It is in the religious ſeminaries deſtined for the inſtruction of young ladies, that theſe contradictions are moſt glaring. Suppoſe therefore I

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enter a convent: it is eight in the morning, the hour of conference; there is held a diſcourſe on modeſty; the ſuperior of the convent proves, that a boarder ſhould never look at a man. The clock ſtrikes nine; the dancing-maſter is in the parlour. Mind your ſteps, he ſays to his ſcholar, hold up your head, and always look at your partner. Now which of theſe is ſhe to believe? the dancing-maſter or the miſtreſs of the convent? The ſcholar does not know; and therefore acquires neither the grace the firſt would give her, nor the reſerve that is preached to her by the other. Now from whence do theſe contradictions ariſe, but from the contradictory deſires of the parents, who would have their daughter at once agreeable and reſerved, join the prudery of the cloiſter to the graces of the theatre? That is, they would conciliate irreconcilables *.

The Turkiſh education is, perhaps, the only one that is conſentaneous with what is required of women in their own country (25).

The principles of education will be variable and indeterminate ſo long as they do not regard one certain point. What point is that? The greateſt public utility; that is, the greateſt plea-

* A girl is required to be ſincere and ingenuous. A huſband is provided for her; ſhe does not like him; ſhe declares it freely: it is taken amiſs. The parents, therefore, would have her true or falſe, according as it is their intereſt that ſhe ſhould be the one or the other.

ſure, and the greateſt happineſs, of the largeſt number of citizens.

Do parents loſe this point of view? They wander here and there in the paths of inſtruction. Faſhion is their only guide. They know that to make their daughter a muſician they muſt pay a maſter of muſic, but they do not know that to give her juſt ideas of virtue they muſt in like manner pay a maſter of morality.

When a mother undertakes the education of her daughter, ſhe tells her in the morning, while putting on the rouge, that beauty is nothing; that virtue and talents are all *. At that moment company enters to the mother's toilet; every one praiſes the young lady's beauty, but not once a twelvemonth a word is ſaid about her talents and virtue †. The only recompence moreover that is promiſed to her application and her virtue, is the ornaments of dreſs, and yet they would have the young girl be indifferent to her beauty. Into what confuſion muſt her ideas be thrown by ſuch conduct!

* Do they perſuade a girl that without talents ſhe will never get a huſband? to-morrow ſhe hears that the moſt ſtupid of her companions has made an excellent match, becauſe ſhe had a large fortune, and that without a fortune no one can be married.

† If they commonly praiſe nothing but beauty in a daughter, it is becauſe beauty is really the moſt intereſting and deſirable quality in her we viſit, and to whom we are neither huſband nor friend; and with women the men are always on a viſit.

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The education of a youth is not more conſentaneous: the firſt duty preſcribed him is the obſervance of the laws; the ſecond, their violation, when he is offended; in caſe of an inſult, he is to fight, under pain of being diſhonoured. Do they prove to him, that it is by ſervices rendered his country, he will obtain the conſideration of this world, and the felicity of the next; what models do they propoſe for his imitation? A monk, a fanatical and ſlothful derviſe, whoſe intoleration has filled empires with trouble and deſolation.

A father recommends to his ſon fidelity to his promiſe. A theologian then comes and tells the young man, that we are not bound to keep our promiſe to the enemies of God; for which reaſon Lewis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantz given by his anceſtors; that the pope has decided this queſtion, by declaring every treaty made between catholic princes and heretics to be void, and by giving the former the power of violating thoſe treaties whenever they have ſufficient ſtrength.

A preacher proves in the pulpit, that the God of the Chriſtians is the God of truth; that it is by their hatred to falſehood his worſhippers are known (26). He deſcends from the pulpit, and then owns, that it is quite prudent to obſerve a reſervation (27); that he himſelf in praiſing the truth, takes great care how he ſpeaks it (28). In fact, the man who ſhould write the true hiſtory

of

of his times, in a catholic country, would ſet all theſe worſhippers of the God of truth againſt him (29). In ſuch a country, a man to guard himſelf from perſecution, muſt either be dumb, a fool, or a liar.

Suppoſe a preceptor, by force of application, ſhould inſpire his pupil with candour and humanity; his ſpiritual director enters, and tells him that we may pardon mankind their vices, but not their errors; that in the latter caſe indulgence is a crime, and that every one who does not think as he does ſhould be burned.

Such is the ignorance and contradiction of a theologian, that he declaims againſt the paſſions at the very moment he would excite emulation in his pupil. He then forgets that emulation is a paſſion, and a very ſtrong paſſion too, if we judge by its effects.

In every part of education, therefore, there is contradiction. What is the cauſe? An ignorance of the true principles of this ſcience; they have nothing but confuſed ideas about it. Mankind ſhould be elucidated; the prieſt oppoſes it. Does the truth dawn a moment upon them? Its rays are abſorbed in the darkneſs of ſcholaſtics. Error and crime both ſearch for obſcurity, the one in words (30), the other in the night. Let not however all the contradictions of our education be charged to theology; there are ſome alſo that ariſe from the vices of government. How will you perſuade a

youth

youth to be faithful to ſociety, and to keep the ſecret of another, when even in England, the government, under a moſt frivolous pretext, opens the letters of private perſons and betrays the public confidence? How can you flatter yourſelf with an expectation of inſpiring him with a horror for ſpies and informers, when he ſees them honoured, rewarded, and penſioned.

When a young man comes from the college, and mixes with the world, he is expected to render himſelf agreeable, and conſtantly preſerve his chaſtity. At the period that the paſſion of love is moſt ſenſibly felt, muſt a young man be indifferent to women, and live in the midſt of them without deſire *? Can parental ſtupidity imagine that when government builds a theatre for operas, and cuſtom ſets it open to young men, that, fond of their virginity, they will always behold with an eye of indifference, a ſpectacle in which the endearments, the tranſports, and magical power of love, are painted in the moſt brilliant

* If they would really damp the deſires of love in a young man, what ſhould they do? Inſtitute violent exerciſes, and, inſpire youth with a taſte for them. Exerciſe is in this caſe the moſt efficacious lecture. The more we perſpire, the more of the animal ſpirits we exhauſt, the leſs vigour remains for love. The coldneſs and indifference of the ſavages of Canada, proceeds from the fatigue and inanition produced by their long and wearifome huntings.

colours, and enter their minds by all the organs of the ſenſes †.

I ſhould never have done if I would make a catalogue of all the contradictions in the European education, and eſpecially in that of the Papiſts. In the thick fog of errors, how ſhall we diſcover the path of virtue? The Catholic, therefore, frequently wanders from it. So that without fixed principles in this matter, it is to his ſituation, to books, to friends, and to the miſtreſſes that chance has given him, that he owes his virtues or vices. But is there any method of rendering the education of men more independent of chance? and if there be, how is it to be attained?

Teach nothing but the truth. Error is continually at contradiction with itſelf: the truth never.

Do not abandon the education of the people to two powers, who having two oppoſite intereſts, conſtantly teach two contradictory moralities (31).

By what fatality, it will be ſaid, have almoſt all nations confided to the prieſthood the moral

† Let it not be imagined, from what is here ſaid, that I am for deſtroying the opera, or the drama. I only mean to condemn the contradiction in our cuſtoms and precepts. I am neither an enemy to the theatre, nor in this matter of the opinion of M. Rouſſeau. The theatres are inconteſtibly pleaſing. Now there is no pleaſure that in the hands of a wiſe government may not, by being made the recompence of virtue, become its productive principle.

inſtruction

inſtruction of their youth! What is the moral of Papiſts? A medly of ſuperſtitions. However there is nothing the ſacerdotal power cannot execute by the aid of ſuperſtition. For by that it robs the magiſtrates of their authority, and kings of their legitimate power: it is by that it ſubdues the people, and acquires a power over them which is frequently ſuperior to the laws; and finally, by that it corrupts the very principles of morality. What remedy is there for this evil? There is but one. This ſcience muſt be entirely refounded. A new ſpirit muſt preſide over the formation of its new principles, and every part of it muſt be directed to the public welfare.

It is time that under the title of the holy miniſters of morality, the magiſtrates ſhould found it on principles that are ſimple, clear, and conformable to the general proſperity, and of which all the inhabitants may form ideas equally juſt and preciſe. But will the ſimplicity and uniformity of theſe principles agree with the different paſſions of men?

Their deſires may be different, but their manner of regarding objects is eſſentially the ſame. They ſee well and do bad. Every one being born with a juſt diſcernment diſcovers the truth, when it is preſented to him in a clear light. With regard to youth, they have more avidity for it, as they are leſs accuſtomed to ſneak it, and have leſs intereſt to ſee objects different from what

they really are. The minds of young people cannot be drawn from the truth without force. To produce this effect, all the patience and all the art of modern education are required; and even then they ſee by fits the light of natural reaſon, and the falſity of thoſe opinions with which their memories are charged. Why then do they not efface thoſe, and ſubſtitute in their place new ideas? Such a change of ideas requires time and pains, and is too difficult a taſk for the greateſt part of mankind, who frequently deſcend to the grave before they have acquired clear and preciſe ideas of virtue.

When will they have juſt ideas? When the religious ſyſtem ſhall coincide with the national proſperity: when religions, the habitual inſtruments of ſacerdotal ambition, ſhall become the felicity of the public. Is it poſſible to conceive of ſuch a religion? The examination of this queſtion deſerves the attention of the ſagacious part of mankind. I ſhall therefore, en paſſant, take a view of the falſe religions.

CHAP. XI.

Of falſe religions.

"EVERY religion, ſays Hobbes, founded on "the fear of an inviſible power, is a tale, that, "avowed by a nation, bears the name of religion, "and

"and disavowed by the same nation, bears the name "of superstition." The nine incarnations of Wistnou are religion in the Indies, and tales at Nuremberg.

I shall not make use of the authority of this definition to deny the truth of religion. If I believe my nurse and my tutor, every other religion is false, mine alone is the true *. But is it acknowledged for such by the universe? No: the earth still groans with the multitude of temples consecrated to error. There is no one that is not the religion of some country.

The histories of Numa, Zoroaster, Mahomet, and so many other founders of modern worship, teach us that all religions may be considered as political institutions, which have a great influence on the happiness of nations. I therefore suppose, as the human mind still produces, from time to time, new religions, that it is a matter of importance, in order to render them the least detrimental possible, to point out the plan that should be followed in their formation.

All religions are false, except the Christian: but I do not confound that with papism.

* Perhaps this assertion will appear absurd. This absurdity, however, is common to all men. The ridicule in me, as in them, is the effect of pride. If each one thinks his religion the best, it is because each one says to himself: *They who do not think as I do, are wrong.* I therefore express myself in the same manner as others.

CHAP. XII.

Popery is of human inſtitution.

PAPISM in the eyes of a man of ſenſe is nothing more than mere idolatry (32). The Roman church without doubt regarded it as no other than a human inſtitution, when, it made of that religion a ſcandalous uſe, an inſtrument of its avarice and ambition, that ſerved to promote the criminal projects of the popes, and legitimate their avidity and pride. But theſe imputations, ſay the papiſts, are calumnies.

To prove them to be true, I aſk if it be probable that the heads of the monaſtic orders regarded their religion as divine, when to enrich themſelves and their convents, they forbade the monks to inter any one in holy ground who died without making them a bequeſt? If they were themſelves the dupes of a doctrine publicly profeſſed, when they made themſelves proprietors (33) of goods, that in quality of ſtewards for the poor, they ought to have divided among them? If the popes thought they really practiſed juſtice and humility, when they declared themſelves the diſtributors of the kingdoms of America, over which they had no ſort of right? When by a line of demarkation, they divided that part of the world (34) between the Spaniards and Portugeſe? Laſtly, when they pretended to reign over princes,

direct

direct them in temporal matters, and be the arbitrary diſpoſers of their crowns? O papiſts! examine what has been the conduct of your church in all ages. Has it ſought to entertain a Roman garriſon in every kingdom, and to attach a great number of men to its intereſt? (it is the practice of every ambitious ſect.) It has inſtituted a great number of religious orders; erected and peopled a great number of monaſteries; and laſtly has had the artifice to quarter this eccleſiaſtical militia in the countries where it was eſtabliſhed.

The ſame motive that made it deſire the multiplication of the ſecular clergy, has multiplied the ſacraments: and the people, in order to receive them, were obliged to augment the number of their prieſts. They ſoon equalled that of the graſs-hoppers of Egypt. Like them they devoured the harveſts; theſe prieſts, ſecular and regular, being maintained at the expence of the catholic nations. To bind theſe prieſts more cloſely to its intereſt, and to enjoy their affection without a rival, the church obliged them to live a life of celibacy, without wives and without children; but otherwiſe in a ſtate of eaſe and luxury, that made their condition continually more pleaſing to them. This was not all; the Roman church, ſtill farther to increaſe its riches and power, endeavoured, in the name of St. Peter, or ſome other, to raiſe contributions in every kingdom. By this method it in effect

opened a bank between earth and heaven, and under the name of indulgences, received ready money for bills drawn on heaven and payable to order.

Now, as we have ſeen in every age the ſacerdotal power ſacrifice virtue to the luſt of wealth and power; when we read the hiſtory of the popes, and ſee their policy, their ambition, their manners, in a word their whole conduct, and find it ſo different from that preſcribed by the Goſpel, how can we imagine that the chiefs of this religion have had any other deſign than to get poſſeſſion of all the power and wealth of the earth (35)?

After examining the manners and conduct of the monks, the clergy, and pontifs, a proteſtant may, I think, ſhow, for the juſtification of his belief, and the advantage of nations, that papiſm was never any thing more than a human inſtitution. But why have religions been hitherto merely local? Is it not poſſible to conceive of one that may become univerſal?

CHAP. XIII.

Of an univerſal religion.

AN univerſal religion cannot be founded but on principles that are eternal and invariable, that are drawn from the nature of men and things,

things, and that, like the propoſitions of geometry, are capable of the moſt rigorous demonſtration. Are there ſuch principles, and can they be equally adapted to all nations? Yes, doubtleſs: or if they vary, it will be only in ſome of their applications to thoſe different countries where chance has placed the different nations.

But among the principles or laws proper for all ſocieties, which is the firſt and moſt ſacred? That which ſecures to every one his property, his life, and his liberty.

When a man is an uncertain proprietor of his land he will not till his field, he will not cultivate his orchard; the nation ſoon becomes ravaged and deſolated by famine. Is a man the uncertain proprietor of his life and liberty? He that is in continual fear, is without ſpirit and without induſtry: ſolely concerned for his perſonal preſervation, and wrapt up in himſelf, he does not regard what paſſes without him: he does not ſtudy the ſcience of man, nor remark his deſires and his paſſions. It is, however, from this preliminary knowledge that the laws moſt conformable to the public proſperity are to be deduced.

By what fatality have laws ſo neceſſary to ſociety, remained unknown, even to the preſent day? Why has not heaven hitherto revealed them? Heaven, I anſwer, requires that man by his reaſon ſhould co-operate to his own happineſs, and that of the numerous ſocieties of the

earth

earth (36); and that the maſter-piece of an excellent legiſlation ſhould be, like that of other ſciences, the product of genius and experience.

God has ſaid to man, I have created thee, I have given thee ſenſations, memory, and conſequently reaſon. It is my will that thy reaſon, ſharpened at firſt by want, and afterward enlightened by experience, ſhall provide thee ſuſtenance, teach thee to cultivate the land, to improve the inſtruments of labour, of agriculture, in a word, of all the ſciences of the firſt neceſſity. It is alſo my will, that by cultivating this ſame reaſon, thou mayſt come to a knowledge of my moral will, that is, of thy duties toward ſociety, of the means of maintaining order, and laſtly of the knowledge of the beſt legiſlation poſſible.

This is the only natural religion to which I would have mankind elevate their minds, that only which can become univerſal, that which is alone worthy of God, which is marked with his ſeal, and that of the truth. All others muſt bear the impreſſion of man, of fraud and falſehood *. The will of God, juſt and good, is that the children of the earth ſhould be happy,

* *This is evidently to be underſtood of mere natural religion, and has nothing to do with that which is revealed; for the queſtion here is not, whether the revealed religion be true or falſe; but how a natural religion, that would be univerſally uſeful, might be eſtabliſhed.*

and enjoy every pleaſure compatible with the public welfare.

Such is the true worſhip, that which philoſophy ſhould reveal to the world. No other ſaints would belong to ſuch a religion than the benefactors to humanity; ſuch as Lycurgus, Solon, Sydney, the inventors of ſome uſeful art, ſome pleaſure that is new, but conformable to the general intereſt; none would be rejected as reprobate, but the enemies to ſociety, and the gloomy adverſaries to the pleaſures.

Will the prieſts * one day become the apoſtles of ſuch a religion? Their intereſt forbids. The clouds that hover over the principles of morality and legiſlation (which eſſentially are the ſame ſcience) have been brought thither by their policy. It is on the ruins of the greateſt part of religions that ſound morality muſt be founded. Would to God that the prieſts, ſuſceptible of a noble ambition, had ſearched in the conſtituent principles of man, the invariable laws by which nature and heaven directs that the happineſs of ſocieties be eſtabliſhed! Would to God that the religious ſyſtem may become the palladium of public felicity! It is to the prieſts that theſe cares ſhould be confided. They would then enjoy a grandeur and glory founded on public acknowledgement. They might then ſay to themſelves each day of

* *The author means the Roman prieſts, to whom it is plain he every where refers.*

their

their lives, it is by us that mankind are happy. Such a grandeur, ſuch a laſting happineſs appeared to them mean and deſpicable. You might, O miniſters of the altar! become the idols of intelligent and virtuous men! you have choſe rather to command over bigots and ſlaves; you have rendered yourſelves odious to good citizens, by becoming the plague of nations, the inſtruments of their unhappineſs, and the deſtroyers of true morality.

Morality founded on true principles is the only true natural religion. However, if there ſhould be men whoſe inſatiate credulity (37) cannot be ſatisfied without a myſterous religion; let the friends of the marvellous ſearch out among the religions of that ſort, one whoſe eſtabliſhment will be leaſt detrimental to ſociety. "

CHAP. XIV.

Of the conditions, without which a religion is deſtructive to national felicity.

AN intollerant religion, and one whoſe worſhip requires a great expence, is undoubtedly a prejudicial religion. Its intollerance muſt, in proceſs of time depopulate the nation, and the ſumptuous worſhip exhauſt its wealth (38). There are Roman Catholic countries where they reckon near fifteen thouſand convents, twelve thouſand

thouſand priories, fifteen thouſand chapels, thirteen hundred abbeys, ninety thouſand prieſts employed in ſerving forty-five thouſand pariſhes, and beſide all theſe an infinity of abbés, teachers of ſeminariſts, and eccleſiaſtics of every kind. The total number amounting to at leaſt three hundred thouſand men, whoſe charge * would maintain a

* In every country where they count 300,000 monks, curates, prieſts, canons, biſhops, &c. they muſt coſt the ſtate, in lodging, cloathing, feeding, &c. one with another, half a crown per day. Now, to ſupport this, what prodigious ſums muſt the prieſthood raiſe on the nation, in rents, tenths, penſions, impoſts for maſſes, reparations of churches and chapels, parochial and conventual treaſuries, ſeats in churches, offerings, marriages, baptiſms, burials, charities, diſpenſations, miſſions, &c.

The tenths alone that the clergy draw from the cultivated lands of a country, are nearly equal to what is received by all its proprietors. In France the arpent * of cultivated land, let at five ſhillings and ſix pence, or ſix ſhillings, yields about twenty or twenty-two minots of corn of three buſhels each. The prieſt for his tenth takes two; the price of theſe two minots, or ſix buſhels, may be, one year with another, eight or nine ſhillings. The prieſt moreover takes as much ſtraw as may amount to five ſhillings; beſides his tenth of oats and their ſtraw amounting to twenty pence or two ſhillings: total fifteen ſhillings that the prieſt takes in the three years for the ſame land, that yields the proprietor in the ſame time ſixteen or eighteen ſhillings, out of which he is to pay the tenth, ſupport his farm, make good the deficiencies of unlet land, and loſs by farmers, &c.

From this calculation it is eaſy to judge of the immenſe riches of the clergy; ſuppoſe we reduce the number to 200,000? Their maintenance will then amount to 25,000 pounds ſterling per day, and conſequently to nine millions one hundred and twenty five thouſand pounds per annum. Now what a fleet

* *arpent contains one hundred perches ſquare, of eighteen feet each.*

formidable

formidable army and marine. A religion thus expenſive to a ſtate (39) cannot long be the religion of an enlightened and well governed nation (40). The people that ſubmit to it will labour only to maintain the eaſe and luxury of the prieſthood; each of its inhabitants will be nothing more than a ſlave to the ſacerdotal power.

and army might be maintained with this ſum? A wiſe government, therefore, cannot be deſirous of ſupporting a religion that is ſo expenſive and burdenſome to the ſubject. In Auſtria, Spain, and Bavaria, and perhaps even in France, the prieſts, (deduction being made for intereſt paid to annuitants) are richer than the ſovereigns.

What remedy is there for this abuſe? There is but one; and that is to diminiſh the number of the prieſts. But there are religions (and the Roman Catholic is of this ſort) whoſe worſhip requires a great number. In this caſe the worſhip ſhould be changed, or at leaſt the number of the ſacraments diminiſhed. The fewer prieſts there are, the fewer funds will be neceſſary for their maintenance. But theſe funds are ſacred. Why? Is it becauſe they are in part uſurped from the poor? The clergy are only the depoſitaries. Therefore no taxes ſhould be levied on theſe funds, but ſuch as are abſolutely neceſſary for government. I would obſerve further, that the temporal power being expreſly appointed to watch over the temporal happineſs of the people, it has a right to the adminiſtration of ſuch legacies as are left to the poor, and to reaſſume all the funds of which the monks have defrauded them. But what uſe ſhall be made of them? Apply them to the actual ſupport of the wretched; either by charities or diminution of taxes, or by the purchaſe of ſmall poſſeſſions, which diſtributed among thoſe whom poverty has deprived of their property, will, by making them proprietors, render them cit-

Theſe long notes will not perhaps, afford much entertainment to an E[illegible]an. They ſhould however afford him a ſenſible pleaſure, when he reflects how p-per the inhabitants of this country now are, than their anceſtors were [illegible] centuries paſt.

A [illegible]

A religion, to be good, therefore, ſhould be tolerant and little expenſive (41). Its clergy ſhould have no authority over the people. A dread of the prieſt debaſes the mind and the ſoul; makes the one brutiſh and the other ſlaviſh. Muſt the miniſters of the altar be always armed with the ſword? Can the barbarities committed by their intollerance ever be forgotten? The earth is yet drenched with the blood it has ſpilt! Civil tollerance alone is not ſufficient to ſecure the peace of nations: the eccleſiaſtic muſt concur in the ſame intention. Every dogma is a ſeed of diſcord and injuſtice that is ſown among men. Which is the truly tolerant religion? That which like the pagan has no dogma, or which may be reduced like that of the philoſophers, to a ſound and [illegible] which will, doubtleſs be one day the religion of the univerſe.

It is requiſite, moreover, that a religion be gentle and humane;

That its ceremonies contain nothing gloomy or ſevere:

That it conſtantly preſent ſpectacles that are pompous, and feſtivals that are pleaſing (42):

That its worſhip excite the paſſions, but ſuch paſſions only as tend to the public utility; the religion that ſtifles them produces Talapoins, Bonzes, and Bramins; but never heroes, illuſtrious men, and noble citizens.

The

The religion that is joyful, supposes a noble confidence in the goodness of the Supreme Being. Why would you have him resemble an Eastern tyrant? Why make him punish slight faults with eternal torment? Why thus put the name of the Divinity at the bottom of the portrait of the devil? Why oppress the soul with a load of fear, break its [illegible]ings, and of a worshipper of Jesus, make a vile, [illegible]animous slave? It is the malignant who paint [illegible]nant God. What is their devotion? A [illegible] their crimes.

[illegible]ligion departs from its political purpose, [illegible] man who is just, humane toward his [illegible] and distinguished for his talents and his [illegible] not assured of the favour of heaven: [illegible]mentary desire, a burst of passion, or [illegible] can deprive [illegible] the omission of a [illegible] of it for [illegible]ver.

Let not the rewards of heaven be made the price of trifling religious operations, which convey a diminutive idea of the Eternal, and a false conception of virtue; its rewards should never be assigned to fasting, hair-cloth, a blind submission, and self-castigation.

The man who places these operations among the virtues, might as well place those of leaping, dancing, and tumbling on the rope. What is it to the public whether a young fellow slog himself or make a perilous leap?

As

As they formerly deified the fever, why not deify the public good? Why has not this divinity his worſhip, his temple, and his prieſts; (43) and laſtly, why make a virtue of ſelf-denial? Humanity is in man the only virtue truly ſublime: it is the principal, and perhaps the only one with which religions ought to inſpire mankind, as it includes almoſt all others.

Let humility be held in veneration by a convent: it favours the meanneſs and idleneſs of a monaſtic life (44). But ought this humility to be the virtue of a people? No: A noble pride has ever been that of a renowned nation. It was the ſpirit of contempt, with which the Greeks and Romans regarded the ſlaviſh nations; it was a juſt and lofty opinion of their own courage and force, that concurring with their laws, enabled them to ſubdue the univerſe*. Pride, it will be ſaid, attaches a man to the earth: ſo much the better; pride is therefore uſeful. Let religion, far from

* *That the Romans owed much of their exaltation to this ſpirit is very certain, but it is not ſo certain that they made a right uſe of it, or at leaſt did not carry it to an exceſs; for as Lord Bolingbroke obſerves, in his Letters on the Study of Hiſtory, when ſpeaking of the Roman nation, during the career of their conqueſts. They had not then learned the leſſon of moderation;* "*An inſatiable thirſt of* "*military fame, an unconfined ambition of extending their empire,* "*an extravagant confidence in their own knowledge and force, an* "*inſolent contempt of their enemies, and an impetuous, overbearing* "*ſpirit, with which they purſued all their enterprizes, compoſed at* "*that time the diſtinguiſhing character of a Roman, and their* "*ſages had not then learned, that virtues in excels degenerate into* "*vices.*"

oppoſing, encreaſe in man an attachment to things terreſtial; let every citizen be employed in promoting the proſperity, the glory and power of his country; and let religion be the panegyriſt of every action that promotes the welfare of the majority, ſanctify all uſeful eſtabliſhments, and never deſtroy them. May the intereſt of the ſpiritual and temporal powers be for ever one and the ſame; may theſe two powers be reunited, as at Rome, in the hands of the magiſtrates (45): may the voice of heaven be henceforth that of the public good: and may the oracles of God confirm every law that is advantageous to the people!

CHAP. XV.

Among the falſe religions which have been leaſt detrimental to the happineſs of ſociety?

THE firſt I ſhall mention is that of the Pagans: but at the time of its inſtitution, this pretended religion was nothing more than the allegorical ſyſtem of nature. Saturn was Time, Ceres, Matter; and Jupiter, the generating Spirit (46). All the fables of mythology were mere emblems of certain principles of nature. When we conſider it as a religious ſyſtem, was it ſo abſurd to adore, under various names, the different attributes of the Divinity *?

* We are aſtoniſhed at the abſurdity of the Pagan religion: poſterity will one day be far more aſtoniſhed at the religion of the Papiſts.

In

In the temples of Minerva, of Venus, Mars, Apollo, and of Fortune, whom did they adore? Jupiter, by turns conſidered as wiſe, beautiful, powerful, enlightning and fertiliſing the univerſe. Is it more rational to erect, under the names of St. Euſtache, St. Martin, or St. Roch, temples to the Supreme Being? But the Pagans kneeled before ſtatues of wood or ſtone. The Catholics do the ſame; and if we may judge by exterior appearances, they frequently expreſs more veneration for their ſaints than for the Eternal.

I am willing to allow moreover that the Pagan religion was the moſt abſurd. It is wrong for a religion to be abſurd: its abſurdity may have miſchievous conſequences. This fault however is not of the firſt magnitude; and if its principles be not entirely oppoſite to the public good, if its maxims may be made agreeable to the laws, and the general utility, it is even the leaſt detrimental of all others. Such was the Pagan religion. It never oppoſed the projects of a patriotic legiſlature. It was without dogmas, and conſequently humane and tolerant. There could be no diſpute, no war among its ſectators that the ſlighteſt attention of the magiſtrates would not prevent. Its worſhip moreover did not require a great number of prieſts, and therefore was not neceſſarily a charge to the ſtate.

Their Lares or domeſtic gods, ſufficed for the daily worſhip of individuals. Some temples erect-

ed in large cities, ſome colleges of prieſts, ſome pompous feſtivals, were ſufficient for their rational devotion. Theſe feſtivals, in the vacation from rural labours, gave the inhabitants an opportunity to viſit the cities, and became thereby a ſeaſon of pleaſure. Though theſe feaſts were magnificent, they were rare, and conſequently but little expenſive. The Pagan religion had not therefore any of the inconveniencies of Papiſm.

This religion of the ſenſes was beſide the moſt proper for mankind, the beſt adapted to produce thoſe ſtrong impreſſions that it is neceſſary for the legiſlature ſometimes to excite in the people. The imagination being thereby continually kept in action, nature was held in entire ſubjection to the empire of Poeſy, which enlivened and invigorated every part of the univerſe. The ſummits of the mountains, the wide extended plains, the impenetrable foreſts, the ſources of the rivers, and the depths of the ſeas, were peopled by the Oreades, the Fauns, the Napes, the Hamadryades, the Tritons, and Nereides. The gods and goddeſſes lived in ſociety with mortals, took a part in their feaſts, their wars, and their amours; Neptune ſupped with the king of Ethiopia. The Nymphs and the Heroes ſat down among the Gods. Latona had her altars. The deified Hercules eſpouſed Hebe. Theſe celebrated heroes inhabited the fields and the groves of Elyſium. Theſe fields, ſince adorned by the fiery imagination of the prophet,

phet, who tranſported thither the Houres, here the abode of various and illuſtrious men of every ſort. It was there that Achilles, Patroclus, Ajax, Agamemnon, and all thoſe heroes that foug under the walls of Troy, were ſtill employed in military exerciſes; it was there that Pindar and Homer ſtill celebrated the Olympic games, and the exploits of the Greeks.

The ſort of exerciſe and ſong that had been the occupation of the heroes and poets on the earth; in a word, all the taſtes they had contracted, accompanied them in the infernal regions. Their death was not properly any other than a prolongation of their life.

According to this religion, what muſt have been the moſt earneſt deſire, the moſt cogent intereſt of the Pagans? That of ſerving their country by their talents, their courage, their integrity, their generoſity, by all their virtues. It became a matter of importance to render themſelves dear to thoſe with whom they were to continue their exiſtence after death. Far from extinguiſhing that enthuſiaſm a wiſe legiſlation inſpires for virtue and talents, it was by this religion more ſtrongly excited. The ancient legiſlators convinced of the utility of the paſſions, had no deſire to ſtifle them. What ſort of men would you look for among a people without deſires? Merchants, captains, ſoldiers, men of letters, able miniſters? No: none but monks.

A people without induſtry, courage, riches, and ſcience, are born the ſlaves of any neighbour that has boldneſs enough to put on their fetters. Men muſt have paſſions, and the Pagan religion did not extinguiſh in them the ſacred and animating fire. Perhaps the Scandinavian, a little different from the Greek and Roman, led mankind to virtue by a more efficacious method. Reputation was the god of this people. It was the only divinity from whom the inhabitants expected their reward. Every one aſpired to be the child of Reputation. Every one honoured the bards, as the diſtributors of glory, and the prieſts of the temple of renown *. The ſilence of the bards was dreadful to warriors, and even to princes. Contempt was the lot of every one that was not the child of Reputation. Flattery was then unknown to the poets. The ſevere and incorruptible inhabitants of a free country, they had not then debaſed themſelves by ſervile eulogies. No one among them even dared to celebrate a name that the public eſteem had not already conſecrated. To obtain this eſteem, a man muſt have rendered ſome ſervice to his country. The religious and powerful deſire of an immortal fame, therefore, excited men to render them-

* The advantage of this religion over ſome others is inеſtimable; as it rewards thoſe talents and actions only that are uſeful to our country; and the heaven of other religions, is the reward of faſting, ſolitude, macerátion, and other ſtupid virtues that are uſeleſs to ſociety.

ſelves

ſelves illuſtrious by their talents, and their virtues. What advantage is not ſuch a religion, that was at the ſame time more pure than the Pagan, procure to a nation!

But is a religion of this kind to be eſtabliſhed in a ſociety already formed? The attachment of a people to the prevaling worſhip well known, and their horror againſt a new religion. What method can be taken to change the received opinions?

The method is perhaps more facile than may be imagined. If in a nation reaſon be tolerated, it will ſubſtitute the religion of Renown in preference to all others. But if it ſhould ſubſtitute mere Deiſm, what advantage will it not have given to humanity *! But will the worſhip, rendered to the Divinity, remain a long time pure? The people are groveling; ſuperſtition is their religion. The temples elevated at firſt to the Eternal, will ſoon be conſecrated to his ſeveral perfections; ignorance will make of them as many gods. Be it ſo; and ſo far let the magiſtrate permit them to go: but arrived there, let the ſame magiſtrate, attentive to direct the progreſs of ignorance, and more eſpecially of ſuperſtition, keep it always in view; let him obſerve what form it aſſumes, and oppoſe the eſtabliſhment of

* *That is, how much better is it that men ſhould be mere Deiſts than Papiſts: not knowing Chriſtianity, than make it ſubſervient to wicked and contemptible purpoſes.*

every dogma, every principle inconſiſtent with ſound morality, that is to ſay, with the public utility.

Every man is jealous of his fame. If the magiſtrate, as at Rome, unites in his perſon the double office of ſenator and miniſter of the altar (47); the prieſt in him ſhould be conſtantly ſubordinate to the ſenator, and religion conſtantly ſubordinate to the public happineſs.

The abbé of St. Peter has ſaid, the prieſt cannot be really uſeful but in quality of an officer of morality. Now, who can better fill that noble function than the magiſtrate? Who better than he can ſhow the motives of general intereſt, on which are founded particular laws; and the indiſſolubility of the bond that unites the happineſs of individuals with that of the public.

What influence would not a moral inſtruction, given by a ſenate, have on the minds of the people? With what reſpect would not the latter receive the deciſions of the former? It is from the legiſlative body only that we can expect a beneficent religion, one moreover that is tolerant and not expenſive, and that offers no ideas of the Divinity but what are grand and ſolemn: that excites the ſoul to a love of talents and virtue; and laſtly, that has not, like the legiſlature, any other object than that of the felicity of the people. Let ſagacious magiſtrates be clothed with temporal and ſpiritual power, and all contradiction between religions

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and patriotic precepts will diſappear; all the people will adopt the ſame principles of morality, and will form the ſame idea of a ſcience, in which it is ſo important for all of them to be equally inſtructed.

Perhaps many ages will paſs by before the alterations that are requiſite for human happineſs can be made in the falſe religions. What has happened to the preſent hour? That men have nothing but confuſed ideas of morality: ideas that they owe to their different ſituations, and to chance, which never gives to two men preciſely the ſame ſeries of circumſtances, nor ever permits them to receive the ſame inſtructions, and acquire the ſame ideas. From whence conclude, that the inequality actually perceived in the underſtandings of different men, can be conſidered as a proof of their unequal aptitude to acquire it.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (page 4.) THE ſcience of man is the ſcience of philoſophers: to whom the politicians think themſelves, in this reſpect, far ſuperior. They in fact know more of the cabals of a cabinet, and in conſequence conceive the higheſt opinion of their own abilities. If they are curious to know their merit, let them write on man, and publiſh their thoughts; the eſteem they will be held in by the public will teach them what eſteem they ought to have for themſelves.

2. (ibid.) The miniſter knows the detail of affairs better than the philoſopher. His informations of this ſort are more extenſive: but the latter has more leiſure to ſtudy the heart of man, and knows it better than the miniſter. They are both, by their different ſpecies of ſtudy, deſtined to elucidate each other. The miniſter who would promote the public good, ſhould be the friend and protector of letters. Before it was ſaid at Paris to print any thing but Catechiſms and Almanacs, it was to the numerous pamphlets of intelligent men, France, they ſay, owed the advantage of exporting corn, which was demonſtrated by men of ſcience. The miniſter, who was then at the head of the finances availed himſelf of their informations.

3. (p. 6.) To whatever degree of perfection education may be carried, let it not be imagined however that all who are able to receive it may be made men of genius. By the aid of inſtruction an emulation may be excited among the people, they may be habituated to attention, have their hearts opened to humanity, and their minds to truth; in a word, all the people may be made, if not men of genius, at leaſt men of underſtanding and ſenſibility. But, as I ſhall prove in the courſe of this work, this is all the improved ſcience of education can perform, and it is enough. A nation compoſed in general of ſuch ſort of men would be, without diſpute, the firſt in the univerſe.

4. (p. 7.) At Vienna, Paris, Liſbon, and in all the catholic countries, they permit the ſale of operas, dramas, romances, and even ſome good books of geometry and medicine.

cine, but of every other ſort, the work of ſuperior merit, and that is regarded as ſuch by the reſt of Europe, is prohibited. Such are thoſe of Voltaire, Marmontel, Rouſſeau, Monteſquieu, &c. In France, the approbation of the cenſor, is for an author almoſt always a certificate of his ſtupidity. It announces a book without enemies, which at firſt will be received with approbation, becauſe no one troubles himſelf about it, becauſe it does not excite envy, nor wound any one's pride; and contains nothing but what all the world knows. The general eulogy of the moment of publication, almoſt always excludes that of futurity.

5. (p. 7.) The ſcholaſtic, ſays the Engliſh proverb, is a mere aſs, that having neither the meekneſs of a Chriſtian, nor the reaſon of a philoſopher, nor the affability of a courtier, is nothing more than an object of ridicule.

6. (ibid.) What is the ſcience of ſcholaſtics? it is to abuſe words, and render their ſignification uncertain. It was by the virtue of certain barbarous terms that the magicians formerly deſtroyed enchanted caſtles, or at leaſt their appearance. The ſcholaſtics, heirs of the power of the ancient magicians, have, by virtue of certain unintelligible words, in like manner given the appearance of a ſcience to the moſt abſurd reveries. If there be a way to deſtroy their enchantments, it muſt be by obliging them to give a preciſe definition of the terms they uſe. Were they forced to annex clear ideas to their terms, the magic of their ſcience would vaniſh. We ſhould, therefore, miſtruſt every work where frequent uſe is made of the language of the ſchools; that in common uſe is almoſt always ſufficient for thoſe that have clear ideas. He that would inſtruct, and not deceive mankind, ſhould ſpeak their language.

7. (p. 10.) There are but few countries where the ſciences of morality and politics are ſtudied. Young people are ſeldom permitted to exerciſe their minds on ſubjects of this ſort. The prieſts are unwilling they ſhould contract a habit of reaſoning. The word *rationel* is now ſynonimous with *incredulous*. The clergy probably ſuſpect that the arguments for faith, like the little wings of Mercury, are too weak to ſupport it. To be a philoſopher, ſays Malbranche, we muſt ſee clearly; and to be faithful, we muſt believe blindly. Malbranche did not perceive that he made a fool of his firm believer. In fact, wherein does a ſottiſh credulity conſiſt? in believing without ſufficient evidence. They will tell me here of the faith of Charbonnier.

bonnier. He was in a particular ſituation. He talked with God, who gave him an inward light. Every man except this Charbonnier, who boaſts of a blind faith, and a belief on *hear-ſay*, is therefore a man puffed up with infatuation."

8. (p. 11.) Let us ſometimes amuſe ourſelves with the paintings of ridicule. There is nothing better. Every excellent piece of this ſort ſuppoſes a large ſhare of diſcernment in him that drew it. What does ſociety owe him? a tribute of gratitude and applauſe proportionate to the evils his ridicule has baniſhed, by expoſing this or that defect. A nation that ſhould regard this matter as important, would be itſelf ridiculous." "Of what conſequence is it, ſays an Engliſh author, "that a certain citizen is ſingular in his humour: that a petit "maitre is curious in his dreſs, or a coquet affected in her "behaviour? ſhe may white-waſh, paint, and patch her face, "and lie with her gallant, without affecting my property: "the inceſſant flutter of a fan does not injure my conſtitution." A nation too much buſied with the coquetry of a woman, or the fatuity of a petit maitre, is evidently a frivolous nation.

9. (p. 12.) All nations have reproached the French with their frivolity. "If the French, ſaid Mr. Saville formerly, are frivolous, the Spaniards grave and ſuperſtitious, the Engliſh "ſerious and profound; theſe properties are the effects of their "forms of government. It is at Paris that the man curious "in trinkets and dreſs ought to fix his abode: it is at Madrid "and Liſbon they ought to reſide who love to give themſelves "diſcipline, and ſee their brethren burnt alive; and laſtly it is "at London they ſhould live, who would think, exert that faculty which principally diſtinguiſhes the man from the brute. According to this author, there are but three ſubjects worthy of "conſideration: nature, religion, and government. Now, as the "French, ſays he, dare not think on theſe ſubjects, their books, "inſipid to men, can afford entertainment only to women. Liberty alone enobles the ſpirit of a nation, and the ſpirit of a "nation that of its writers. The minds of the French are without energy. The only eſtimable author among them that I "have a regard for is Montaigne. Few of his fellow-ſubjects are "worthy to admire him: to feel him we muſt think, and to think "we muſt be free*."

10. (p. 27.)

* *A great part of that univerſal reſpect which is paid to the writings of Montaigne ariſes, I imagine, from his unparalleled frankneſs.*

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10. (p. 27.) The jeſuits afford a ſtriking example of the power of education. If their order has produced few men of genius in the arts or ſciences; if they have had no Newton in phyſics, no Racine in Tragedy, no Huygens in aſtronomy, or Pot in chymiſtry; no Bacon, Locke, Voltaire, Fontaine, &c. it is not that the religious of this order never find among their ſcholars thoſe who diſcover the greateſt genius. The Jeſuits moreover, from the tranquility of their colleges, have not their ſtudies moleſted by any avocations, and their manner of living is the moſt favorable to the acquiſition of talents. Why then have they given ſo few illuſtrious men to Europe? It is becauſe ſurrounded by fanatics and bigots, a Jeſuit dare not think but after his ſuperiors: it is, moreover, becauſe forced to apply themſelves for years together to the ſtudy of the caſuiſts and theology, that ſtudy, ſo repugnant to ſound reaſon, deſtroys its efficacy on them. How can they preſerve on the benches a juſt judgment! the habit of ſophiſtry muſt corrupt it.

11. (ibid.) If all the Savoyards have in a manner the ſame character, it is becauſe chance has placed them in ſituations nearly ſimilar, and that they almoſt all receive nearly the ſame education. Why are they all travellers? becauſe there is no living without money, and they have none at home. Why are they laborious? becauſe they are without aſſiſtance, and without protection in the countries were they tranſplant themſelves; and bread is not to be had without labour. Why are they faithful and diligent? becauſe to be employed in preference to the natives, they muſt ſurpaſs them in diligence and fidelity. Why, in the laſt place, are they all economiſts? becauſe having, like other men, an attachment to their native country, they go out beggars to return rich, and live on what they have accumulated. Suppoſe, therefore, we had the greateſt deſire to inſpire a young man with the virtues of a Savoyard, what is to be done? place him in a ſimilar ſituation; and let a part of his education be confided to misfortune and indigence. Want and poverty are the only inſtructors whoſe leſſons are always heard, and whoſe

We ſee his inmoſt thoughts; and there is in the human mind ſuch a ſtrong reliſh for the truth, when it does not oppoſe our intereſt, that wherever we are ſure we ſee it, we are ſure to be pleaſed. Montaigne wrote whatever he thought; moſt authors write whatever they think will pleaſe their readers.

counſels

counſels are always efficacious. But if the national manners will not permit him to receive ſuch an education, what other muſt be ſubſtituted for it? I do not know: no other can be ſo certain. We ſhould not be ſurpriſed, therefore, if he do not acquire any of the virtues we deſire him to have. Who can wonder at the want of ſucceſs in an education that is inſufficient.

12. (p. 30.) Shakeſpeare never played but one part well, which was the ghoſt in Hamlet.

13. (p. 31.) See the extract in the Dictionary of Moreri, and the extract from the Republic of Letters: Jan. 1685, "It was to "a lady to whom was given at Rouen the name of Melita, that "France owes the great Corneille." It is in like manner to love that England owes the celebrated Hogarth.

14. (p. 32.) The greater part of men of genius would have it believed that their early youth announced what they ſhould one day be: this is their foible. Would they pretend to be of a ſuperior race to the reſt of mankind? be it ſo. Let us not diſpute this point with their vanity; we ſhall affront them; but let us not believe it on their mere aſſertion; we ſhould deceive ourſelves. Nothing is more eluſory and uncertain than theſe firſt prognoſtics. Newton and Fontenelle were but indifferent ſcholars. The claſſes are filled with clever children, the world with fooliſh men.

15. (p. 33.) The life or death, the favour or diſgrace of a patron, frequently determine our future ſtate and profeſſion. How many men of genius do we owe to accidents of this ſort. Falſehood, meanneſs and frivolity reign in a court? do men live there without regard for truth, humanity, and poſterity? Who can doubt but diſgrace or oppreſſion may be ſometimes ſalutary to a courtier; he may recollect in exile what man owes to himſelf; and freed from the diſſipations of a court, a habit of ſtudy and meditation may chance to produce in him the development of the moſt exalted talents. *(See on this head Ld. Bolingbroke's Reflections on Exile.)*

16. (ibid.) M. Rouſſeau is not inſenſible; his very railing againſt women is a proof of it. Every one of them may apply to him this verſe.

"Tout juſqu'à tes mepris, m'a prouve ton amour."
All, even thy diſdain, declares thy love.

It is proper to add here, that M. Rouſſeau has ſince made the greateſt atonement a man can make for railing at women; that of marrying.

17. (p. 34.) M. Rouſſeau in his works has always appeared to me leſs ſolicitous to inſtruct than ſeduce his readers. Every where the

the orator, and ſeldom the reaſoner, he forgets that though it is ſometimes permitted to make uſe of eloquence in philoſophic diſcuſſions, it is only when the importance of an opinion already received is to be ſtrongly impreſt on the mind. What neceſſary, for example, to rouſe the Athenians from their ſtupor, and arm them againſt Philip? It was then incumbent on Demoſthenes to exert all the powers of his eloquence: but when a new opinion is to be examined, reaſon alone ſhould be employed: he that is then eloquent is wrong. Does the Engliſh houſe of commons always pay a due attention to the different ſtyle that ſhould be made of eloquence, and the ſpirit of diſcuſſion?

18. (p. 35.) M. Rouſſeau became acquainted at Montmorency with Marſhal Luxembourg; that nobleman had an affection for him, and honoured his [illegible] protected him, and by that protection acquired the right [illegible] acknowledgment from all men of letters. Let not learned [illegible] luſh to extol the truly great, why ſhould they refuſe praiſe were it is deſerved? if the people have need of inſtruction, the literati have need of protectors. The friendſhip of Marſhal Luxembourg could not, it is true, protect M. Rouſſeau from perſecution. Perhaps the influence of that nobleman was not ſufficiently ſtrong; or perhaps the protector of the good and great is not ſo powerful as the hypocriſy of the bad. It may be added to the eulogy of M. Luxembourg, that he never laviſhed his favours on thoſe inſects of literature who reflect diſgrace on their protector.

"If great men chuſe indifferently, ſays Lord Shafteſbury, "any ſubject for their bounty, and are pleaſed to confer their "favour on ſome one pretender to art, or promiſcuouſly to ſuch "of the tribe of writers, whoſe chief ability has lain in making "their court well, and obtaining to be introduced to their ac-"quaintance. This they think ſufficient to inſtal them patrons "of wit, and maſters of the literate order. But this method "will, of any other the leaſt ſerve their intereſt or deſign. The "ill placing of rewards is a double injury to merit; and in "every cauſe or intereſt, paſſes for worſe than mere indiffe-"rence or neutrality. There can be no excuſe for making an "ill choice. Merit in every kind is eaſily diſcovered when "ſought. The public itſelf fails not to give ſufficient indica-"tions, and points out thoſe geniuſſes which want only coun-"tenance and encouragement to become conſiderable. An "ingenious man never ſtarves unknown: and great men muſt "wink hard, or it would be impoſſible for them to miſs ſuch

"advan-

" advant ageous opportunities, of shewing their generosity, and " acquiring the universal esteem, acknowledgments, and good " wishes of the ingenious and learned part of mankind."
" dvice to an Author, Sect. I. p. 229.

3. (p. 40) More than half a million sterling seized in Spain on the procurators of the jesuits at Paraguai, shows that in preaching a contempt for riches, the jesuits have not been the dupes of their own sermons.

mon. (p. 41.) Of all legends the most ridiculous are those the " nks write of the founders of their orders They say, for example, " that at the sight of a saw pursued by the wolves, St. C. net " commanded them to stop, and they immediately obeyed.

" That St. Florent having no shepherd, ordered a bear he " met by the way to feed and the bear led them to " the pasture every day.

" That St. Francis greet e birds, talked to them, and " commanded them to hea n word of God, and the birds " hearing the discourse of St. Francis, were exceedingly " glad, stretching out their necks, and opening their beaks.

" That the same St. Francis passed eight days with a grass- " hopper; sung a whole day together with a nightingale; " cured a mad wolf, and said to him, Brother wolf, you ought " to promise me that you will not hereafter be so mischievous as " you have been; which the wolf promised by bowing his head; " St. Francis then said to him, Give me your pledge, and at the " same time held out his hand to receive it; and the wolf gent- " ly lifting up his right paw, put it on the hand of the saint." They write also that many other saints took delight in talking with brutes.

21. (p. 43.) They certainly do not attach a clear idea to the word *passions*, when they regard them as detrimental. This is a mere dispute about words. The theologians themselves have never said that the lively passion of the love of God is a crime. They have not condemned Decius for vowing himself in the field of battle to the infernal gods. They have never reproached Pelopidas with that animated love of his country which armed him against the tyrants, and engaged him in a most perilous enterprize. Our desires are our motives, and it is the force of our desires which determines that of our virtues and vices. A man without desire, and without want, is without invention and without reason. No motive can engage him to combine, or compare his ideas with each other. The more a man approaches

proaches that ſtate of apathy, the more ſtupid he becomes. If the ſovereigns of the Eaſt are in general ſo ignorant, it is becauſe diſcernment is the child of deſire and want. Now the Sultans feel neither the one nor the other. There is no pleaſure which a ſimple act of their will does not procure: invention therefore is almoſt always uſeleſs. The only inſtance in which it becomes neceſſary, is, when deſirous of the title of a conqueror, they would raviſh the ſcepter from ſome neighbouring potentate. In every other circumſtance to require ſagacity in a deſpotic prince, is to require an effect without a cauſe. To reckon in an arbitary government on the capacity of a monarch born to the throne, is abſurd. So that without the chance of a very extraordinary education, there are few ſovereigns at once abſolute and intelligent. Therefore hiſtory commonly, in the number of great monarchs, reckons only ſuch as Henry IV. Frederic, Catherine II. &c. and thoſe among the princes, whoſe education has been ſevere, and who have had a fortune to make, and a thouſand obſtacles to ſurmount.

22. (p. 43.) A bigot may excel in geometry, and a certain ſort of painting; but when we conſider the preſent contradiction between the intereſt of the public, and the intereſt of the prieſt, a man cannot, without inconſiſtency, be at once religious and a ſtateſman, a ſaint and a good citizen, that is to ſay, an honeſt man. This is a truth that will be demonſtrated in the courſe of this work.

23. (p. 44.) It was formerly the petit maitre who knew all things without learning any thing; now it is the theologian. Aſk him about the nature of animals: they are, he will ſay, mere machines. But by what argument does he ſupport this aſſertion? has he, in quality either of ſportſman or philoſopher, ſtudied the conſtitution and manners of animals? No. He has brought up neither dog nor cat, not ſo much as a ſparrow: but he is a doctor, and, from the moment he took his degree, he has thought himſelf, like the emperor of China, obliged by the etiquet of his rank, to anſwer to all that is aſked him, *I know it.* The ſtoical ſage was ſuppoſed to be verſed in all arts and ſciences; he was the univerſal ſcholar. The theologian is the ſame; he is poet, mathematician, philoſopher, watchmaker, &c. That he may have all theſe talents I agree: but not to read his verſes and buy his watches. Will he permit me to give him a word of advice: it is, before he talks of animals, to conſult the works of M. Buffon, and three or four

letters in the Journal Etranger, by an accurate obſerver and a good writer: and that he forbear to attack my ſentiments on this point. I have given, they ſay, a mind and reaſon to brutes. That is a favour I did the doctors. What was your acknowledgment, O ungrateful mortals!

24. (p. 44.) The property of deſpotic government is to weaken the movements of the paſſions in man. A conſumption is therefore the mortal malady of theſe empires and governments, and the people ſubject to them have not, in general, either the confidence or courage of republicans. Even the latter have not excited our admiration, but in thoſe critical moments when their paſſions were in the higheſt effervescence. In what times did the Hollanders and the Swiſs perform actions more than human? When animated by the two violent paſſions of vengeance, and a hatred of tyrants. Paſſions are neceſſary to a people: this is a truth of which every body is now convinced, except the Guardian of the Capuchins.

25. (p. 45.) The Turk ſuppoſes woman to be formed for the pleaſure of man, and created to irritate his deſires. Such, he ſays, is the evident deſign of nature. Therefore that in Turkey that they ſhould permit art to add to the beauty of their women, that they ſhould even enjoin them to improve the methods of pleaſing, is quite natural. What abuſe can be made of beauty that is confined in a ſeraglio? Suppoſe, if you pleaſe, a country were the women are in common. In ſuch a country, the more methods they ſhould invent to ſeduce, the more they would multiply the pleaſures of man. Whatever degree of perfection of this kind they might attain, we may be ſure that their coquetry would have nothing contrary to the public good. All that could be then required of them, would be that they ſhould preſerve ſo much veneration for their beauty and their favours, as to beſtow them only on men diſtinguiſhed by their genius, their courage, or their probity. By this method their favours would become an encouragement to talents and virtue. But in Turkey if the women may, without inconvenience, inſtruct themſelves in all the arts of delight, is it the ſame in ſuch a country as Europe? Where they are not ſhut up, nor common? where, as in France, every houſe is open; is it to be imagined, that by the women's multiplying the arts to pleaſe, they would much augment the happineſs of their huſbands? I doubt it: and till ſome reformation is made in the laws of matrimony, what art might add

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to the natural beauties of the ſex, would perhaps be inconſiſtent with the uſe that the European laws permit them to make of it.

26. (p. 47.) There are men who pretend to veracity, by virtue of their calumnies; whereas nothing is more oppoſite to truth than ſlander: the one, always indulgent, is inſpired by humanity; the other, always ſevere, is the daughter of pride, of hatred, malevolence, and envy. The tone and geſture of detraction always diſcover its parent.

27. (ibid.) If we cannot without a crime, conceal the truth from the people and the ſovereign; what man has ever been without reproach in this reſpect.

28. (ibid.) If on reading the eccleſiaſtic hiſtory, a young Italian, ſhocked at the follies and villanies of the popes, ſhould doubt of their infallability. What an impious doubt! his preceptor would exclaim. But, replies the pupil, I ſpeak what I think; and have you not always forbad me to lie? Yes, in ordinary caſes; but in favour of the church falſehood is a duty. And what intereſt have you in the pope? A very great one, replies the preceptor. If the pope's infallibility be acknowledged, no one can reſiſt his will. The people muſt obey him implicitly. Now what conſideration does not this reſpect for the pope reflect on all the eccleſiaſtic body, and conſequently on me?

29. (p. 48.) Whoever in writing hiſtory alters the facts, is a bad citizen. He deceives the public, and deprives it of the ineſtimable advantage it might receive from that hiſtory. But in what nation can we find a juſt hiſtorian, and a real adorer of the God of truth? is it France, in Portugal, or Spain? No: it is only in a free and reformed country.

30. (ibid.) Why are the theological diſputes about grace interminable? Becauſe, luckily for the diſputants, neither one ſide nor the other have any clear ideas of what they talk about. Do they preſent ſuch as are more clear in their definitions of the Divinity? Cardinal Perron, after having in a ſet diſcourſe proved the exiſtence of a God, to Henry III. ſaid to him, If your majeſty pleaſe, I will now prove his non-exiſtence juſt as clearly.

There is ſcarce any propoſition that may not be proved either true or falſe, in words; but this ſort of proof is very different from that which enforce conviction on the mind. All the arguments the moſt ſubtle wit can imagine, will never convince a thinking

man, that there is not one eternal, infinite, omnipotent, creating Power; though they may ſo confound his ideas that he may not be able to untangle the ſophiſtry.

Quibbles of this kind, eſpecially when applied to ſubjects of importance, are a ſcandalous abuſe of the rational faculty, and diſcover an inſolent contempt of the party to whom they are offered.

31. (p. 50.) Why do the moſt part of ſenſible people regard all religions as incompatible with ſound morality? Becauſe the prieſts of every religion ſet themſelves up as the only judges of the goodneſs or badneſs of human actions; it is becauſe they would have the deciſions of theology regarded as the real code of morality. Now the prieſt is a man, and in that quality judges in conformity to his intereſt; and his intereſt is almoſt always oppoſite that of the public; therefore the greateſt part of his judgments are unjuſt. Such, however, is the power of the prieſt over the minds of the people, that they have frequently more veneration for the ſophiſtries of the ſchool, than for the ſound maxims of morality. What clear ideas can the people form about them. The deciſions of the church, as variable as its intereſts, involve them continually in confuſion, obſcurity, and contradiction. What does the church ſubſtitute for the true principles of juſtice? Ridiculous ceremonies and obſervances. So that Machiavel in his Diſcourſes on Livy, attributes the exceſſive iniquity of the Italians to the falſity and contradictions in the moral precepts of the Catholic religion.

32. (p. 54.) Man, ſays Fontenelle, has made God after his own image, and could not make him otherwiſe. The monks in like manner have faſhioned the celeſtial court after thoſe of oriental monarchs: the prince is there inviſible to the greateſt part of his ſubjects, and acceſſible only to his courtiers. The complaints of the people do not reach him but through the ears of his favourites. The monks have, in like manner, environed the throne of the Monarch of the univerſe, by thoſe they call ſaints, and would not have the celeſtial favours obtained but by the interceſſion of theſe ſaints. But what muſt be done to render them propitious? The prieſts aſſembled for this purpoſe decide, that the images of the ſaints in wood, ſculptured or unſculptured, ſhould be placed in the churches, and that the people ſhould kneel before them, as before the Almighty; that the exterior ſigns of adoration ſhould be the

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ſame for the Eternal and for his favourites; in ſhort, that honoured by the Chriſtians, as the Penates and the Fetiches by the Pagans, and Savages, St. Nicholas in Ruſſia, for example, and St. Janvier at Naples, ſhould be treated with greater reſpect than God himſelf. It is on theſe facts that are founded the accuſations brought againſt the Greek and Latin churches. It is to the laſt eſpecially, that we owe the re-eſtabliſhment of Fetechiſm. Thus France has a national Fetiche in St. Denyis, and a Fetiche of its capital in St. Genevieve; and there is no community, nor even inhabitant, that has not his particular Fetiche under the name of Peter, Claud, Martin, &c.

33. (p. 54.) There are no frauds, falſehoods, tricks, betraying of confidence, in ſhort, no methods more baſe and villainous than thoſe the prieſts have employed to encreaſe their wealth. The Capitularies collected by Baluze, vol. ii. inform us by what means the clergy of France formerly acquired their tenths. "They produced a letter, which they ſaid came down "from heaven, and was wrote by Jeſus Chriſt; in which our "Saviour threatened the Pagans, the Sorcerers, and thoſe who "did not pay the tenth, to blaſt their fields with ſterility, "and to ſend flying ſerpents into their houſes, to devour the "breaſts of their women." This firſt letter not ſucceeding, the prieſts had recourſe to the devil. They produced him (ſee the ſame Capitularies, vol. i.) in an aſſembly of the nation, and the devil becoming at once apoſtle and miſſionary, and zealouſly concerned for the welfare of France, endeavoured to recall them to their duty by ſalutary caſtigations. "Open your "eyes at laſt, ſaid the clergy, the devil himſelf was the author "of the laſt famine; it was he that devoured the corn in the "ear; dread his fury. He has declared, in the midſt of the "fields, with dreadful howlings, that he will inflict the moſt "cruel puniſhment on thoſe hardened Chriſtians who refuſe "the tenth." So many impoſtors on the part of the clergy prove that, in the time of Charlemagne, none but the pious ſouls paid the tenth. If the clergy were ſuppoſed to have had a right to levy it, they would not have had recourſe to God and the devil. This fact makes me recollect another of the ſame ſort: it is a ſermon of a vicar on the ſame ſubject. "O, my dear pariſhioners, he ſaid, do not follow the example "of the wretched Cain, but much rather that of the good Abel. "Cain would never pay the tenth, nor go to maſs. Abel, on

" the contrary, always paid it with the fairest and best, and " never once missed a mass." Grotius, on the subject of tenths and donations, says, " that the scruple of Tiberius in accept- " ing such gifts, should make the monks ashamed of their " rapacity."

34. (p. 54.) The popes by their ridiculous pretensions on America, have given the example of iniquity, and authorised all the acts of injustice the Christians have there exercised.

When there was one day, an examination in the house of Commons, whether a district situate on the confines of Canada, belonged to France, one of the members got up and said, " This question, gentleman, is the more delicate, as the French, " as well as we, are fully persuaded that the land in question " does not belong to the natives of the country."

35. (p. 56.) After these facts, though the papists may still boast of the great perfection to which their religion carries the morals of mankind, they will make no proselytes. To show the pretensions of the papists, let them be asked what is the object of the science of morality? It will appear that it cannot be any thing else than the *public good*; for if we require virtues in individuals, it is because the virtues of the members make the felicity of the whole body. Now it is evident that the only method to render the people at once learned, virtuous, and happy, is to secure the property of individuals by sound laws, to excite their industry, to permit them to think and communicate their thoughts. But is the papistical religion the most favourable to such laws? are the inhabitants of Italy and Portugal more secure in their lives and properties than those of England? Do they enjoy a greater a greater liberty of thought? Are their governments founded on better principles of morality, and are they less severe, and consequently more respectable? Does not experience prove on the contrary, that the Lutherans and Calvinists in Germany are better governed and more happy than the Catholics; and that the protestant Cantons of Switzerland are more rich and powerful than those of the papists. The reformed religion therefore tends more directly to the happiness of the public, than the Catholic; and is more favourable to the object of morality. It therefore inspires better morals, and such as have no other tendency than to promote the felicity of the people.

36. (p. 58.)

36. (p. 58.) There are great, and there are ſmall ſocieties. The laws of the latter are ſimple, becauſe their intereſts are clear. They are conformable to the intereſt of the majority, becauſe they are made by the conſent of all; they are, laſtly, very exactly obſerved, becauſe the happineſs of each individual is connected with their obſervance. It is good ſenſe that dictates the laws of ſmall ſocieties; it is genius that plans thoſe of large communities.

But what can determine men to form ſuch large communities? Chance; an ignorance of the inconveniences attending ſuch ſocieties, a deſire to conquer, a fear of being ſubdued, &c.

37. (p. 60.) Shafteſbury in his Treatiſe on Enthuſiaſm, mentions a biſhop, who not finding, in the Catholic catechiſm, enough to ſatiate his enormous credulity, was forced to have recourſe to the tales of the fairies.

38 (ibid.) It is with popery as with deſpotiſm, they each of them devour the country were they are eſtabliſhed. The moſt certain method of debilitating the power of England or Holland, would be to eſtabliſh there the Catholic religion.

39. (p. 62.) If our religion, ſay the papiſts, be very expenſive, it is becauſe its inſtructions are greatly multiplied. Be it ſo: but what is the produce of theſe inſtructions? Are mankind the better for them? No. What is to be done to make them ſo? Divide the tenths of each pariſh among thoſe who cultivate their lands beſt, and perform the moſt virtuous actions. This diviſion of the tenths will produce more labourers, and more honeſt men, than all the preachments of the curates.

40. (ibid.) The Hiſtory of Ireland informs us, vol. i. p 303. that it was, at a diſtant period, conſtantly expoſed to the voracity of a moſt numerous clergy. The poets, the prieſts of the country, enjoyed all the advantages, immunities, and privileges of Catholic prieſts; and like them, were maintained at the public expence. Theſe poets in conſequence, multiplied to ſuch a degree, that Hugh, then king of Ireland, found it neceſſary to diſcharge his ſubjects from ſuch a heavy burden. That prince loved his people, and was a man of courage; he determined, therefore, to annihilate the prieſts, or at leaſt greatly diminiſh their number, and ſucceeded in the enterprize.

In Penſylvania there is no religion eſtabliſhed by government: each one adopts that he likes beſt. The prieſt is no

charge to the ſtate. The individuals provide them as they find it convenient, and tax themſelves accordingly. The prieſt is there, like the merchant, maintained at the expence of the conſumer. He who has no prieſt, and conſumes no part of the commodity he deals in, pays not part of his expence. Penſylvania, therefore, is a model from which it would be proper to copy.

41. (p. 63.) Numa himſelf inſtituted but four veſtals, and a very ſmall number of prieſts.

42. (ibid.) There is the ſame difference between paganiſm and popery, ſaid an Engliſhman, as between Albani and Calot; the name of the former makes me recollect a pleaſing picture of the birth of Venus; that of the other, a groteſque painting of the temptation of St. Anthony.

43. (p. 65.) Under the reign of Numa, the Romans conſecrated a temple to Fidelity; the dedication of this temple kept them for ſome time faithful to their treaties.

44. (ibid.) Whoever affects ſuch great humility, and accuſtoms himſelf early to regard life as a pilgrimage, will never be be any thing better than a monk, nor ever promote the happineſs of the human race.

45. (p. 66.) The reunion of the ſpiritual and temporal powers in the hands of the ſame arbitrary ſovereign may be dangerous, it will be ſaid; I believe it. Every arbitrary prince, in general, ſolely ſolicitous to gratify his caprice, is but little concerned for the felicity of his ſubjects. He will frequently make uſe of the ſpiritual power to legitimate his pleaſures and his cruelties: but it will not be the ſame if this power be confided to the body of magiſtrates.

46. (ibid.) Why was Jupiter ſuppoſed to be the laſt of the children of Saturn? becauſe order and generation, the ſucceſſors of chaos and ſterility, were, according to the Pagan philoſophers, the laſt product of time. Why was Jupiter, in quality of generator, called the god of the air? becauſe, ſaid the philoſophers, vegetables, foſſils, minerals, animals, in a word all that exiſts, tranſpire, exhale, corrupt, and fill the air with volatile principles. Theſe principles being heated and put in action by the ſolar fire, the air muſt then produce a new generation by the ſalts and ſpirits received from the putrefaction. The air, therefore, the only principle of generation and corruption, appeared to them as an immenſe ocean agitated by numerous

merous different principles. It is in the air, according to them, the ſeeds of all beings float, which conſtantly ready to re-produce, wait for that purpoſe the moment when chance ſhall diſpoſe them in a convenient matrix. The atmoſphere appeared to them, to uſe the expreſſion, always alive; being charged with an acid to corrupt, and with ſeeds to engender. It was the vaſt recipient of all the principles of animation. The Titans and Janos, according to the ancients, were in like manner the emblem of chaos. Venus or love, that of attraction, the productive principle of order and harmony in the univerſe.

47. (p. 72.) The reunion of the temporal and ſpiritual powers in the ſame hands, is indiſpenſable. Nothing is done againſt the ſacerdotal body by merely making it more humble. Who does not entirely annihilate it ſuſpends, and not deſtroys its influence. A body is immortal; a favourable circumſtance, ſuch as the confidence of a prince, or a revolution in the ſtate, is ſufficient to reſtore its primitive power. It will then revive with a vigour the more redoutable, as by being inſtructed in the cauſes of its abaſement, it will be more attentive to overthrow them. The eccleſiaſtical body in England is at preſent without power, but it is not annihilated. Who then can affirm, ſaid a certain nobleman, that it will not one day reaſſume its original ferocity, and again cauſe as much blood to flow as it did formerly *. One of the greateſt ſervices that could be rendered to France, would be to employ a part of the extravagant revenues of the clergy to the liquidation of the national debt. What could the clergy object, if careful of their welfare, they were to preſerve their benefices during life, and if after that they were to be alienated? Where would be the evil of bringing ſo large a quantity of riches again into the circulation.

* *Our author will be excuſed this wild ſuppoſition, as being a ſtranger, and not ſufficiently acquainted with our excellent conſtitution. Such an alteration in the power of the clergy, would totally deſtroy that equilibrium in which the eſſence of our liberty conſiſts.*

SEC.

SECTION II.

All men, commonly well organiſed, have an equal aptitude to underſtanding.

CHAP. I.

As all our ideas proceed from the ſenſes; the underſtanding has been conſequently regarded as the effect of more or leſs ſenſibility in the organiſation.

WHEN we learn from Locke, that it is to the organs of the ſenſes we owe our ideas, and conſequently our underſtanding; and when we remark the difference in the organs and in the underſtandings of different men, we may conclude, in general, that the inequality of their underſtandſtandings is the effect of the unequal ſenſibility of their organs. An opinion ſo probable, and ſo analogous to facts * muſt be the more generally adopted, as it favours human indolence, and prevents the pain of a fruitleſs ſearch.

* It is by the aid of analogies that we ſometimes make the greateſt diſcoveries: but in what caſes ſhould we be content with a proof by analogy? When it is impoſſible to procure any other. This ſort of proof is frequently fallacious. Have we conſtantly ſeen animals generate by the coupling of the males with the females? We conclude from thence, that it is the only method by which animals can propagate. To undeceive ourſelves, we ſhould with the moſt accurate and ſcrupulous attention

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If contrary experiments, however, prove that the ſuperiority of underſtanding is not in proportion to the greater and leſs perfection of the ſenſes, we muſt ſearch for the explication of this phenomenon in ſome other cauſe.

Two opinions concerning this ſubject divide the learned of the preſent age. The one ſay, *The underſtanding is the effect of a certain ſort of interior temperament and organiſation.* But no one has, by a ſeries of obſervations, yet determined the ſort of organs, temperament, or nouriſhment that produces the underſtanding*. This aſſer-

encloſe a vine-fretter in a phial†; we ſhould divide the polypus, and prove by reiterated experiments, that there is another method by which animals can regenerate.

* Some phyſiologiſts, and among them M. Lauſel de Magny, have ſaid, that the ſtrongeſt and moſt courageous temperaments were the moſt acute. Yet no one has ever mentioned Racine, Boileau, Paſchal, Hobbes, Toland, Fontenelle, &c. as ſtrong and courageous men. Others pretend that the bilious and ſanguine are at once the moſt ingenious, and leaſt capable of a conſtant attention. But can we ſay, at the ſame time, incapable of attention, and endowed with great talents? can it be imagined, that without application, Locke and Newton had ever made their ſublime diſcoveries?

Some again have remarked, that the cogitative and ingenious are ordinarily melancholic: but have not perceived that they took in them the effect for the cauſe, that the ingenious is not

† *Our author is certainly right in directing theſe obſervations to be made with the moſt ſcrupulous attention; and after all perhaps they will be far from concluſive. Who can ſay that the ſemen of the inſect here mentioned cannot pervade glaſs, when we know that body is permeable by other ſubſtances, ſuch as the magnetic and electric effluvia, as well as light.*

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tion being vague and deſtitute of proof, is then reduced to this, *The underſtanding is the effect of an unknown cauſe, or occult quality, to which is given the name of temperament or organiſation.*

Quintilian, Locke, and I, ſay:

The inequality in minds or underſtandings, is the effect of a known cauſe, and this cauſe is the difference of education.

To prove the firſt of theſe opinions, we muſt ſhow, by repeated experiments, that the ſuperiority of the underſtanding does really belong to ſuch a ſort of organ or temperament: Now theſe proofs are yet to be made.* From whence it follows, that if from the principles I lay down, the cauſe of the inequality in minds or underſtandings can be clearly deduced, we ought to give the preference to the latter opinion

Now when a known cauſe can explain a fact, why ſhould we have recourſe to one that is unknown, to an occult quality, whoſe exiſtence, always uncertain, explains nothing that we cannot explain without it?

ſo, becauſe he is melancholic, but melancholic becauſe the habit of meditation made him ſo.

In the laſt place, many have made the underſtanding depend on the ſenſibility of the nerves; but women have very lively ſenſations. The ſenſibility of their nerves ſhould therefore give them a great ſuperiority over men. Are their underſtandings really ſuperior? No. Beſide, what clear idea can we form after all, of the greater or leſs ſenſibility of the nerves?

To prove *that all men equally well organiſed, have an equal diſpoſition for underſtanding** ; we muſt remount to the principle by which it is produced : what is it ?

* Mr. Locke was doubtleſs partly convinced of this truth, when he ſaid, ſpeaking of the unequal capacity of underſtandings, he thought he ſaw leſs difference between them, than is commonly imagined. "I think, ſays he, in the ſecond page "of his Education, we may aſſert, that in a hundred men, there "are not more than ninety, who are what they are, good or bad, "uſeful or pernicious to ſociety, but from the inſtruction they "have received. It is on education that depends the great "difference obſervable among them. The leaſt and moſt im-"perceptible impreſſions received in our infancy, have conſe-"quences very important, and of a long duration. It is with "theſe firſt impreſſion, as with a river, whoſe water we can "eaſily turn, by different canals, in quite oppoſite courſes, ſo-"that from the inſenſible direction the ſtream receives at its "ſource, it takes different directions, and at laſt arrives at "places far diſtant from each other: and with the ſame "facility, I think, we may turn the minds of children to what "direction we pleaſe." In this paſſage Locke does not indeed expreſly affirm, that all men equally well organiſed, have equal aptitude to mental capacity : but he here ſays, what he had been, as it were, a witneſs of, and what daily experience had taught him. This philoſopher had not reduced all the faculties of the mind to the capacity of ſenſation, which is the only principle than can reſolve this queſtion.

Quintilian, who had been for ſo long a time charged with the inſtruction of youth, had ſtill more practical knowledge than Locke, and is more bold in his aſſertions. He ſays, Inſt. Orat. lib. i. "It is an error to think that there are few men born "with the faculty of diſcerning the ideas offered them, and "that the greateſt part loſe their time and pains in endea-"vouring to conquer the innate idleneſs of their minds. The "greateſt number, on the contrary, appear equally well orga-"niſed,

All the ſenſations of man are material. Perhaps I have not ſufficiently explained this truth in my treatiſe on the Mind. What then ſhould I here propoſe? To demonſtrate rigorouſly, what, perhaps, I have there only aſſerted, and prove that all the operations of the mind are reducible to ſenſation. It is this principle, that can alone explain to us how we owe our ideas to our ſenſes; and at the ſame time that it is not, however, as is proved by experience, to the extreme perfection of thoſe ſenſes, that we owe the greater or leſs extent of our underſtanding.

If this principle will reconcile two facts, in appearance ſo contradictory, I ſhall conclude, that the ſuperiority of the underſtanding is not the produce of temperament, nor of the greater or leſs perfection of the ſenſes, nor of an occult quality, but that of the well known cauſe, education, and

" niſed to think and retain with promptitude and facility. It is " a talent as natural to man, as flying is to birds, running to " horſes, and ferocity to ſavage beaſts. The life of the ſoul is " in its activity and induſtry, from whence it has received the " attribute of a celeſtial origin. Minds that are ſtupid and " incapable of ſcience, are in the order of nature to be regard- " ed as monſters and other extraordinary phenomena: minds " of this ſort are rare. From whence I conclude, that there are " great recourſes to be found in children, which are ſuffered to " vaniſh with their years. It is evident therefore that it is " not of nature, but of our negligence we ought to complain."

The opinions of Quintilian and Locke, both founded on experience, and the proofs I have urged to demonſtrate this truth, ought, I think, to ſuſpend on this ſubject the too precipitate judgment of the reader.

in ſhort, that inſtead of vague aſſertions ſo frequently repeated, we may ſubſtitute very determinate ideas.

Previous to the particular examen of this queſtion, I think, in order to make it more clear, and to avoid all conteſt with the theologians, I ſhould firſt diſtinguiſh between the mind, and what they call the ſoul.

CHAP. II.

Of the difference between the mind and the ſoul.

THERE are no two words perfectly ſynonimous. This truth being unknown to ſome, and forgot by others, has cauſed the words Mind and Soul to be frequently confounded. But what is the difference between them? and what is the ſoul? Are we to regard it, after the ancients, and the firſt fathers of the church, as a matter extremely refined, and as the electric fire by which we are animated? Were I here to recount all the opinions of different nations, and different ſects of philoſophers, concerning it, they would altogether form nothing but vague, obſcure, and trifling ideas. The only people that expreſſed themſelves with ſublimity on this ſubject, were the Parſis.* When they pronounced a

* A people of Cambya, in the empire of the Mogul.

funeral

funeral oration over the tomb of ſome great man, they cried "O earth! O, common mother of human "beings, take back what to thee appertains of the "body of this hero: let the aqueous particles that "flowed in his veins exhale into the air, and fall- "ing in rain on the mountains, repleniſh the "ſtreams, fertiliſe the plains, and roll back to "the abyſs of the ocean from whence they pro- "ceeded! Let the fire concentered in this body "rejoin the heavenly orb, the ſource of light and "heat! Let the air confined in his members, "burſt its priſon, and be diſperſed by the winds "in the mundane ſpace! And laſtly thou, O "breath of life, if perchance thou art of a nature "ſeparate from all others, return the unknown "being that produced thee! or, if thou art "only a mixture of material elements, mayeſt "thou, after being diſperſed in the univerſe, "again aſſemble thy ſcattered particles, to form "another citizen as virtuous as this hath been!"

Such were the noble images, and ſublime expreſſions employed by the enthuſiaſm of the Parſis, to expreſs the ideas they had of the ſoul. Philoſophy, leſs bold in its conjectures, dares not deſcribe its nature, and reſolve the queſtion. Philoſophy cannot advance without the ſtaff of experience: it does indeed advance but conſtantly from obſervation to obſervation, *and where obſervation is wanting it ſtops.* All that philoſophy knows,

knows is, that man feels, that he has within him a principle of life, and that without the wings of theology, he cannot mount to the knowledge of this principle.

Whatever depends on observation appertains to metaphysical philosophy; all beyond belongs to theology * or scholastic metaphysics.

* Some have doubted whether the science of God, or theology, be in fact a science. All science, they say, supposes a series of observations. Now what observations can be made on a Being that is invisible and incomprehensible? Theology is therefore no science. In fact, what do we understand by the word God? The unknown cause of order and motion. Now, what can we say of an unknown cause? If we attach other ideas to the word God, we shall fall, as Mr. Robinet has shown, into a thousand contradictions. Does the theologian contemplate the curves described by the heavenly bodies, and conclude from thence that there is a power who moves them? Cæli enarrant gloriam Dei! The theologian is then nothing more than an astronomer, or natural philosopher †.

No one doubts, say the Chinese Letters, that there is in nature, *a ruling Power, though he is ignorant what it is*: but when we conjecture the nature of this unknown power, *the creation of a God is then nothing more than the deification of human ignorance.*' I do not entirely agree with these Letters, though I am forced to own with them, that theology, that is to say, the science of God, or the incomprehensible, is not a separate science. What is then theology? I do not know.

† *It is surely much better to be a rational astronomer, or philosopher, than a metaphysical quibbler, or atheist, for an atheist is nothing else: one of those sublime investigators, who, as Pope says,*

Nobly take the high priori road,
And reason downward till they doubt of God.

If any one should ask what was the cause of thought, I might reply the action of the soul upon the nerves of the brain. But is the soul material or immaterial? If the latter, how can immateriality act on matter; and if the former, in what manner does it act? I

But why has not human reaſon, elucidated by obſervation, yet given a clear definition, or to ſpeak more properly, an adequate and minute deſcription of the principle of life? Becauſe that principle has ſtill eſcaped the moſt accurate obſervation. With the mind it is better acquainted. We can moreover examine this principle, and think on this ſubject without dread of the ignorance and fanatiſm of the bigots. I ſhall therefore here conſider ſome of the remarkable differences between the mind and the ſoul.

FIRST DIFFERENCE.

The ſoul exiſts intire in the infant as well as in the adult. The infant, as well as the man, is ſenſible of pleaſure and pain, but he has not ſo many ideas, nor conſequently ſo much mind or underſtanding as the adult. Now if the infant have as much ſoul without having as much mind, the ſoul is not the mind *. In fact, if the ſoul

* They deny a child the power of ſinning before it is ſeven years old. Why? becauſe before that age it is ſuppoſed to have no juſt idea of good or evil. That age paſſed, it is reputed a ſinner, becauſe it is then ſuppoſed to have acquired adequate

cannot anſwer theſe queſtions. I do not know in what manner gravity acts. But what of that, will any one tell me there is no gravity in nature, becauſe I do not know how it is produced? or, becauſe I cannot give a clear explication of the manner in which thought is produced, that therefore I do not think at all? and with juſt as much reaſon do ſome men doubt, or affect to doubt, the exiſtence of a firſt creating cauſe, becauſe they cannot comprehend its manner of exiſtence, that is, becauſe they cannot comprehend what is by its nature incomprehenſible.

and the mind were one and the ſame thing, to explain the ſuperiority of the adult over the infant, we muſt admit more ſoul in the former, and agree that his ſoul has encreaſed with his body: a ſuppoſition abſolutely gratuitous, and inſignificant, when we diſtinguiſh the mind from the ſoul or principle of life.

SECOND DIFFERENCE.

The ſoul does not leave us till death. As long as I live I have a ſoul. Is it the ſame of the mind? no. I can loſe it during my life: becauſe, while I yet live I can loſe my memory; and the mind is almoſt entirely the effect of that faculty. The Greeks gave the name of Mnemoſyne to the Mother of the Muſes, becauſe, being attentive obſervers of man, they perceived that his judgment, wit, &c. were in great part the produce of his memory. *

adequate ideas of juſt and unjuſt The mind or underſtanding is therefore regarded by the church itſelf as an acquiſition, and conſequently as quite different from the ſoul.

* Underſtanding, or intelligence is alſo in brutes the effect of memory. If a dog comes at my call, it is becauſe he remembers his name. If he obey me when I pronounce theſe words, *Softly; take care; dont touch that*; it is becauſe he remembers that I am ſtrong, and that I have beat him.

What makes animals perform ſo many tricks in the public ſpectacles? The fear of the whip; of which the look, the ſpeech, and geſture of the maſter puts them continually in mind. If my dog ſtop and look at me, it is becauſe he would read in my eyes, whether I am pleaſed or angry, and conſequently know if he ſhall approach or fly me. My dog, therefore, owes his intelligence to his memory.

If a man be deprived of this faculty, of what can he judge? of ſenſations paſt? No: he has forgot them; and of ſenſations preſent, it is neceſſary to have at leaſt as much memory as will give him an opportunity of comparing them together, that is, of obſerving alternatively the different impreſſions he feels at the preſence of two objects. Now, without a memory to preſerve impreſſions, how perceive the difference between thoſe of this inſtant, and thoſe that the inſtant before were perceived and forgotten? There is then no compariſon of ideas, no judgment, no mind, without memory. An ideot, who ſets on the bench at his door, is only a man who has little or no memory. If he do not anſwer to queſtions that are aſked him, it is becauſe he does not remember the ideas affixed to the words, or that he forgets the firſt words of a ſentence before he hears the laſt. If we conſult experience, we ſhall find that it is to the memory (whoſe exiſtence ſuppoſes the faculty of perception) that man owes his ideas and his underſtanding. There can be no ſenſations without a ſoul; but without a memory there can be no experience, no compariſon of objects, no ideas: a man would be the ſame in his old age that he was in his infancy *. A man is reputed an ideot when he is ignorant;

* If the theologians agree that the infant and the ideot cannot ſin, and that they have each of them a ſoul, it follows that in man ſin does not eſſentially belong to the ſoul.

but

but he is only really ſo when his memory no longer exerts its functions *. Now, without loſing our ſoul, we can loſe our memory; as by a fall, an apoplexy, or other accident of the like nature. The mind, therefore, differs eſſentially from the ſoul, as we can loſe the one and ſtill live; and the other is not loſt but with life itſelf.

THIRD DIFFERENCE.

I have ſaid, that the mind of man is compoſed of an aſſemblage of ideas. There is no mind without ideas.

Is it the ſame with the ſoul? No: neither thought nor underſtanding are neceſſary to its exiſtence. As long as man is ſenſible, he has a ſoul. It is therefore the faculty of perception that forms its eſſence. Deprive the ſoul of what does not properly belong to it, that is of the faculty of remembrance, and what faculty is left it? That of perception. It then does not even preſerve a conſciouſneſs of its own exiſtence, because that conſciouſneſs ſuppoſes a concatenation of ideas, and conſequently a memory. Such is the ſtate of

* The famous M. Ernaud, the inſtructor of the deaf and dumb, ſays, in a memoir preſented to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, that if the deaf and dumb have only ſhort intervals of judgment, and reflect but little; if their minds be weak, and their reaſoning inſtantaneous; it is becauſe their memories are almoſt always ſatisfied, and conſequently their ideas and their actions are, and muſt be, without conſequence.

the ſoul, when it has yet no uſe of the faculty of remembrance.

We may loſe our memory by a blow, a fall, or a diſeaſe. Is the ſoul deprived of this faculty? It muſt then, without a miracle, or the expreſs will of God, find itſelf in the ſame ſtate of imbecility it was in the human animalcule. Thought, therefore, is not abſolutely neceſſary to the exiſtence of the ſoul. The ſoul then, is in us nothing but the faculty of perceiving, and this is the reaſon why, as Locke and experience prove, all our ideas come to us by the ſenſes.

It is to my memory I owe the compariſon of my ideas and my judgments, and to my ſoul I owe my ſenſations. It is therefore properly * my ſenſations, and not my thoughts, as Deſcartes aſſerts, that prove to me the exiſtence of my ſoul. But what is the faculty of perception in man? is it immortal and immaterial? Of this human reaſon is ignorant, and revelation inſtructs us. Perhaps it will be objected, that if the ſoul be nothing more than the faculty of perception, its action,

* M. Marion, regent of philoſophy in the college of Navarre, and ſeveral profeſſors, after his example, have maintained that all the operations of the mind may be explained ſolely by the motion of the animal ſpirits, and the traces impreſſed on the memory. From whence it follows, that the animal ſpirits put in motion by exterior objects, can produce in us ideas independent of what we call the ſoul. The mind, therefore, according to theſe profeſſors, is quite diſtinct from the ſoul.

like

like that of one body's ſtriking another, is conſtantly neceſſary, and that the ſoul in this caſe muſt be regarded as merely paſſive. So Mallebranche believed *, and his ſyſtem has been publicly taught. If the theologians of the preſent day condemn it, they will fall into a contradiction with themſelves that will certainly ſomewhat embarraſs them. For the reſt, as men are born without ideas of virtue, vice, &c. whatever ſyſtem the theologians adopt, they will never prove that thought is the eſſence of the ſoul; and that the ſoul, or the faculty of ſenſation, cannot exiſt in us, without its being put in action, that is to ſay, without our having either ideas or ſenſations.

The organ exiſts, when it does not ſound. Man is in the ſame ſtate with the organ, when in his mother's womb; or when overcome with labour, and not troubled by dreams, he is buried in a profound ſleep. If all our ideas moreover, can be ranged under ſome of the claſſes of our knowledge, and we can live without having any ideas of mathematics, phyſics, morality, mechanics, &c. it is then not metaphyſically impoſſible to have a ſoul without having any ideas.

* According to Mallebranche, it is God that manifeſts himſelf to our underſtanding: it is to him we owe all our ideas. Mallebranche, therefore, did not believe that the ſoul could produce them of itſelf: he conſequently thought it merely paſſive. The Catholic church hath not condemned this doctrine.

The ſavages have little knowledge, they have nevertheleſs ſouls. There are ſome of them who have no ideas of juſtice, nor even words to expreſs that idea. They ſay, that a man deaf and dumb, having ſuddenly acquired his hearing and ſpeech, confeſſed, that before his cure, he had no idea of God or of death.

The king of Pruſſia, prince Henry, Hume, Voltaire, &c. have no more ſoul than Bernier, Lignac, Seguy, Gauchat, &c. The former, however, have minds as ſuperior to the latter, as they have to monkeys, and other animals that are exhibited in public ſhews.

Pompignan, Chaumeix, Caveirac *, &c. have certainly very little underſtanding, however, we always ſay of them, he ſpeaks, he writes, and even he has a ſoul. Now, if by having very little underſtanding, a man has not the leſs ſoul; ideas make no part of it: they are not eſſential to its being. The ſoul, therefore, may exiſt independent of all ideas, and of all underſtanding.

Let us here recapitulate the moſt remarkable differences between the ſoul and the mind.

The firſt is, that we are born with a perfect ſoul, but not with a perfect mind.

* The names of theſe deſpicable mortals are not known in Germany, or in any part of Europe, except by the diminutive parts of M. Voltaire's writings. But for him their exiſtence would never have been known.

The ſecond, that we can loſe our mind, or underſtanding, while we yet live, but that we cannot loſe the ſoul but with life itſelf.

The third, that thought is not neceſſary to the ſoul's exiſtence.

Such was doubtleſs the opinion of the theologians, when they maintained, after Ariſtotle, that it was to the ſenſes the ſoul owed its ideas. Let it not be imagined, however, that the mind can be conſidered as entirely independent of the ſoul. Without the faculty of ſenſation, memory, the productive power of the mind, would be without functions, it would be of no effect *. The exiſtence of our ideas and our mind, ſuppoſes that of the faculty of ſenſation. This faculty is the ſoul itſelf: from whence I conclude, that if the ſoul be not the mind, the mind is the effect of the ſoul, or the faculty of ſenſation †.

* The Treatiſe on the Mind, ſays, that memory is nothing more than a continued, but weakened ſenſation. In fact, the memory is nothing more than the effect of the faculty of ſenſation.

† I ſhall be aſked, perhaps, what is the faculty of ſenſation, and what produces this phenomenon in us? The following is the opinion of a celebrated Engliſh chymiſt, on the ſoul of animals: "We find, ſays he, in bodies, two ſorts of properties, the exiſtence of one of which is permanent and unalterable; ſuch are its its impenetrability, gravity, mobility, &c. Theſe qualities appertain to phyſics in general."

There are in the ſame bodies other properties, whoſe tranſient and fugitive exiſtence is by turns produced and deſtroyed by certain combinations, analyſes, or motions in their interior parts. Theſe ſorts of properties form the different branches of natural

CHAP. III.

Of the objects on which the mind acts.

WHAT is nature? The aſſemblage of all beings. What can be the employment of the mind in the univerſe? That of an obſerver

natural hiſtory, chymiſtry, &c. and belong to particular parts of phyſics.

Iron, for example, is a compoſition of a phlogiſton and a particular earth. In this compoſite ſtate it is ſubject to the attractive power of the magnet. When this iron is decompoſed, that property vaniſhes: the magnet has no influence over a ferruginous earth deprived of its phlogiſton.

When a metal is combined with another ſubſtance, as a vitriolic acid, this union deſtroys in like manner in iron the property of being attracted by the magnet.

Fixed alkali, and a nitrous acid have each of them ſeparately an infinity of different qualities; but when they are united, there does not remain any veſtige of thoſe qualities, they each of them then ferment with nitre.

In the common heat of the atmoſphere, a nitrous acid will diſengage itſelf from all other bodies, to combine with a fixed alkali.

If this combination be expoſed to a degree of heat, proper to put the nitre into a red fuſion, and any inflammable matter be added to it, the nitrous acid will abandon the fixed alkali, to unite with the inflammable ſubſtance, and in the act of this union ariſes the elaſtic force whoſe effects are ſo ſurpriſing in gunpowder.

All the properties of fixed alkali are deſtroyed, when it is combined with ſand, and formed into glaſs, whoſe tranſparency, indiſſolubility, electric power, &c. are, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, ſo many new creations, that are produced by this mixture, and deſtroyed by the decompoſition of glaſs.

Now

of the relations objects have to each other, and to us: the relations that objects have to me are ſmall in number. I am preſented with a roſe: its colour, its form, and ſmell pleaſe, or diſpleaſe me. Theſe are the relations it has to me. Every relation of this kind is reducible to the agreeable or diſagreeable manner in which an object affects me. It is the concluſive obſervation on ſuch relations that conſtitutes taſte, and its rules.

With regard to the relations objects have to each other, they are as numerous as are, for example, the diverſe objects to which I can compare the form, the colour, and ſmell of my roſe. The relations of this ſort are immenſe, and the obſervation belongs more directly to the ſciences.

Now in the animal kingdom, why may not organiſation produce in like manner that ſingular quality we call the faculty of ſenſation? All the phenomena that relate to medicine and natural hiſtory, evidently prove that this power is in animals nothing more than the reſult of the ſtructure of their bodies; that this power begins with the formation of the organs, laſts as long as they ſubſiſt, and is at laſt deſtroyed by the diſſolution of the ſame organs.

If the metaphyſicians aſk me, what then becomes of the *faculty of ſenſation in an animal?* That which becomes, I ſhould anſwer them, of the quality of attracting the magnet in iron that is decompoſed.

See *Treatiſe on the Principles of Chymiſtry.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

How the Mind acts.

ALL the operations of the mind are reducible to the obſerving of the reſemblances and differences, the agreements and diſagreements that objects have among themſelves and with us. The juſtneſs of the mind or judgment depends on the greater or leſs attention with which its obſervations are made.

Would I know the relations certain objects have to each other? What do I do? I place before my eyes, or preſent to my memory two or more of theſe objects; and then I compare them. But what is this compariſon? *It is an alternate and attentive obſervation of the different impreſſions theſe objects, preſent or abſent, make on me* *. This obſervation made, I judge, that is, I make an exact report of the impreſſions I have received.

Am I, for example, much intereſted to diſtinguiſh between two ſhades of the ſame colour, that are almoſt indiſtinguiſhable; I examine a long time and ſucceſſively, two pieces of cloth tinged with thoſe two ſhades. *I compare them,*

* If the memory, the preſerver of impreſſions received, makes me perceive, in the abſence of the objects, nearly the ſame ſenſations that they excite in me when preſent, it is indifferent, with regard to the queſtion here diſcuſſed, whether the objects of which I form a judgment, be preſented to my eyes, or my memory.

that

that is, *I regard them alternatively.* I am very attentive to the different impreſſions the reflected rays of theſe two patterns make on my eyes, and I at laſt determine, that one of them is of a deeper colour than the other; that is to ſay, I make an exact report of the impreſſions I have received. Every other judgment would be falſe. All judgment therefore is nothing more than a *recital of the two ſenſations, either actually proved, or preſerved in my memory* *.

When I obſerve the relation objects have to me, I am in like manner attentive to the impreſſions I receive. Theſe impreſſions are either agreeable or diſagreeable. Now in either caſe what it is to judge? *To tell what I feel.* Am I ſtruck on the head? Is the pain violent? The ſimple recital of what I feel forms my judgment.

I ſhall only add one word to what I have here ſaid, which is, that with regard to the judgments formed on the relations objects have to each other, or to us, there is a difference, which though of little importance in appearance, deſerves however to be remarked.

When we are to judge of the relation objects have to each other, we muſt have at leaſt two of them before our eyes. But when we judge of the relation an object has to ourſelves, it is evident,

* There can be no judgment without memory, as I have proved in the preceding chapter.

as every object can excite a ſenſation; one alone is ſufficient to produce a judgment.

From this obſervation I conclude, that every aſſertion concerning the relation of objects to each other, ſuppoſes a compariſon of thoſe objects; every compariſon a trouble; every trouble, an efficacious motive to take it. But on the contrary, when we are to obſerve the relation of an object to ourſelves, that is to ſay, a ſenſation, that ſenſation, if it be lively, becomes itſelf the efficacious motive to excite our attention.

Every ſenſation of this kind carries therefore conſtantly with it a judgment. I ſhall not ſtop longer at this obſervation, but repeat, agreeable to what I have ſaid above, that in every caſe to *judge*, is to *feel*.

This being ſettled, all the operations of the mind are reduced to mere ſenſations. Why then admit in man a faculty of judging diſtinct from the faculty of ſenſation. But this is the general opinion: I own it; and it even ought to be ſo. We ſay, I perceive, and I compare; there is therefore in man a faculty of judging and comparing, diſtinct from the faculty of ſenſation. This method of reaſoning is ſufficient to impoſe on the greateſt part of mankind. However, to ſhew its fallacy, it is only neceſſary to fix a clear idea to the word *compare*. When this word is properly elucidated, it will be found to expreſs no one real operation of the mind; that the buſineſs of comparing, as

I have

I have before ſaid, is nothing elſe than *rendering ourſelves attentive to the different impreſſions excited in us by objects actually before our eyes, or preſent to our memory*; and conſequently that all judgment is nothing more *than pronouncing of ſenſations felt*.

But if the judgment made from the compariſon of material objects be nothing more than mere ſenſations, is it the ſame with every other ſort of judgment.

CHAP. V.

Of ſuch judgments as reſult from the compariſon of ideas that are abſtracted, collective, &c.

THE words weakneſs, ſtrength, ſmallneſs, greatneſs, crime, &c. do not repreſent any ſubſtance, that is, any body: how then can the judgments reſulting from the compariſon of ſuch words, or ideas, be reduced to mere ſenſations? I anſwer, that as theſe words do not repreſent any ideas, it is impoſſible, ſo long as we do not apply them to any ſenſible and particular object, to form any judgment about them. But when they are applied by deſign, or imperceptibly, to ſome determinate object, then the word *great* will expreſs a relation, that is, a certain difference or reſemblance obſerved between objects preſent to our ſight, or to our memory. Now the judgment formed

formed of ideas, that by this application become material, will be, as I have repeatedly ſaid, nothing more than the pronouncing of ſenſations felt.

I ſhall be aſked perhaps, from what motives men have invented and introduced theſe algebraical expreſſions, if I may be allowed the term, which till they are applied to ſenſible objects, have no real ſignification, not repreſent any determinate idea? I anſwer, that men thought they ſhould by this method be able to communicate their ideas more eaſily, readily, and even more clearly. It is for this reaſon that they have in all languages created ſo many adjectives and ſubſtantives that are at once ſo vague * and ſo uſeful.

* In the compoſition of the language of a poliſhed people, there conſtantly enters an infinity of pronouns, conjunctions, in ſhort, of words that being void of meaning themſelves, borrow their different ſignifications from the expreſſions with which they are connected, or the phraſes in which they are uſed. The invention of moſt of theſe words is owing to the fear that men had of too much increaſing the ſigns of their languages, and a deſire of communicating their ideas more eaſily. If they had in fact been obliged to create as many words as there are things to which they might be applied; for example, the adjectives *white, ſtrong, great*, as *a great cable, a great ox, a great tree*, &c. it is evident that the multiplicity of words neceſſary to expreſs their ideas would have been too weighty for their memory. It appeared neceſſary therefore to invent ſuch words, as repreſenting no real idea themſelves, having only a local ſignification, and expreſſing merely the relations objects have to each other, ſhould however recall to the mind diſtinct ideas, the moment theſe words were connected with the objects whoſe relation they expreſſed.

Let

Let us take for example, among theſe inſignificant expreſſions, that of the word *line*, conſidered in geometry as having length without breadth or thickneſs; in this ſenſe it recalls no idea to the mind. No ſuch line exiſts in nature, nor can any idea be formed of it. What does the maſter deſign therefore by uſing it? Merely to induce his pupil to give all his attention to the length of a body, without conſidering its other dimenſions.

When, for the facility of algebraical calculation, we ſubſtitute the letters A and B for fixt quantities, do theſe letters preſent any ideas? Do they expreſs any real dimenſion? No. Now what is expreſſed in the algebraical language by A and B, is expreſſed in the common language by the words weakneſs, ſtrength, ſmallneſs, greatneſs, &c. Thoſe words expreſs only a vague relation of things to each other, and do not expreſs any real and clear idea till the moment they are applied to a determinate object, and that object be compared with another. It is then that theſe words being put, if I may ſo ſay, in equation or compariſon, expreſs very preciſely the relation of objects to each other. Till that moment the word greatneſs, for example, recalls to the mind very different ideas, according as it is applied to a fly or an elephant. It is the ſame with regard to what is called in man idea or thought. Theſe expreſſions are in themſelves inſignificant; yet to how many errors have they

given birth: how often have they maintained in the ſchools, that *as thought does not belong to extenſion and matter*, it is evident, that the ſoul is ſpiritual. I confeſs I could never make any thing of this learned jargon. What in fact is the meaning of the word *thought?* Either it is void of meaning, or like the word *motion* it merely expreſſes a mode of a man's exiſtence. Now to ſay that a mode or manner of being, is not a body, or has no extenſion, nothing can be more clear. But to make of this mode a being, and even a ſpiritual being, nothing, in my mind, is more abſurd. What again can be more vague than the word *crime?* That this collective term may convey to my mind a clear and determinate idea, I muſt apply it to a theft, a murder, or ſome ſuch action. Men have invented words of this ſort merely to communicate their ideas more eaſily, or at leaſt more readily. Suppoſe a ſociety was inſtituted into which none but honeſt men were to be admitted; in order to avoid the trouble of tranſcribing a long catalogue of the actions for which any one was to be excluded, they would ſay in one word, that no man guilty of a crime was to be admitted. But of what preciſe idea would the word crime be here the repreſentative? Of no one. This word could be ſolely intended to call to the mind of the ſociety thoſe pernicious actions of which its members might become culpable, and to caution them to take heed to their conduct.

In

In ſhort, this word would be properly nothing more than a ſound, and a more conciſe method of exciting the attention of the ſociety.

If like manner, if we are forced to determine the puniſhment due to a crime, we muſt firſt form clear and preciſe ideas of it, and then recall to our memories, ſucceſſively, the repreſentation of the different crimes a man may commit: then examine which of thoſe offences are moſt detrimental to ſociety, and laſtly, form a judgment which would be, as I have ſo often ſaid, nothing more than *pronouncing the ſenſations felt at the preſence of the ſeveral repreſentations of thoſe crimes.*

Every idea whatever may therefore, in its ultimate analyſis, be always reduced to material facts or ſenſations. Some obſcurity is thrown on diſcuſſions of this kind by the vague ſignifications of a certain number of words, and the trouble that is ſometimes neceſſary to deduce clear ideas from them. Perhaps it is as difficult to analyze ſome of theſe expreſſions, and to reduce them, if I may ſo ſay, to their conſtituent ideas, as it is in chymiſtry to decompoſe certain bodies. However, let us but apply the method and attention neceſſary in this decompoſition, and we ſhall not fail of ſucceſs.

What is here ſaid will be ſufficient to convince the diſcerning reader, that every idea and every judgment may be reduced to a ſenſation. It would be therefore unneceſſary, in order to explain the different

operations of the mind, to admit a faculty of judging and comparing diſtinct from the faculty of ſenſation: but what is, it may be ſaid, the principle or motive that makes us compare objects with each other, and gives us the neceſſary attention to obſerve their relations? Intereſt, which is in like manner, as I am going to ſhew, an effect of corporeal ſenſibility.

CHAP. VI.

Where there is no intereſt, there is no compariſon of objects with each other.

ALL compariſon of objects with each other ſuppoſes attention, all attention a trouble, and all trouble a motive for exerting it. If there could exiſt a man without deſire, he would not compare any objects, or pronounce any judgment; but he might ſtill judge of the immediate impreſſions of objects on himſelf, ſuppoſing their impreſſions to be ſtrong. Their ſtrength becoming a motive to attention, would carry with it a judgment. It would not be the ſame if the ſenſation were weak; he would then have no knowledge or remembrance of the judgment it had occaſioned. A man ſurrounded by an infinity of objects, muſt neceſſarily be affected by an infinity of ſenſations, and conſequently form an infinity of judgments; but he forms them unknown

known to himſelf. Why? Becauſe theſe judgments are of the ſame nature with the ſenſations. If they make an impreſſion that is effaced as ſoon as made, the judgments formed on theſe impreſſions are of the ſame ſort; they leave no remembrance. There is in fact no man who does not, without perceiving it, make every day an infinity of reaſonings, of which he has no conſciouſneſs. I will take, for example, thoſe that attend almoſt all the rapid motions of our bodies.

When in the dance, Veſtris makes a cabriole rather than a entrechat, when Moté in the fencing ſchool thruſts tierce rather than quart, if there be no effect without a cauſe, Veſtris and Moté muſt be determined by reaſons too rapid, if I may ſo ſay, to be perceived. So the motion I make with my hand when a body is going to ſtrike my eye, may be reduced to nearly the ſame; experience tells me, that my hand can reſiſt without pain the blow of a body that would deprive me of ſight: my eyes moreover are dearer to me than my hand: I ought therefore to expoſe my hand to ſave my eyes. There is no perſon that would not uſe the ſame reaſoning in the ſame ſituation; but this habitual reaſoning is not ſo rapid, but that we perceive the moment we have put the hand before the eye, the action, and the cauſe of the action? Now how many ſenſations are there of the nature of theſe habitual reaſonings? How many weak ſenſations that do not

fix our attention, or produce in us either conſciouſneſs or remembrance?

There are moments when the ſtrongeſt ſenſations are, ſo to ſay, imperceptible. I fight, and am wounded. I continue the combat, and perceive not my wound. Why? Becauſe the love of preſervation, rage, and the motion given to my blood, render me inſenſible to the ſtroke that at another time would have fixed all my attention.

There are moments on the contrary, when we are ſenſible of the ſlighteſt impreſſions; that is, when the paſſions of fear, ambition, avarice, envy, &c. concenter all our attention on an object. Am I concerned in a conſpiracy? There is no geſture, no look that can eſcape the reſtleſs and ſuſpicious eyes of my confederates. Am I a painter? Every remarkable effect of the light ſtrikes me. Am I a jeweller? There is no flaw in a diamond that I do not perceive. Am I envious? There is no defect in a great character that my piercing eye does not diſcern. In like manner thoſe paſſions that by concentering all my attention on certain objects, render me ſuſceptible of the keeneſt ſenſations, with regard to them, make me at the ſame time inſenſible to every other ſort of ſenſation.

If I be in love, jealous, ambitious, or diſcontented, and in this ſituation of my mind I traverſe the magnificent palace of a monarch, in vain do the rays reflected from marbles, ſtatues, and

paintings,

paintings, ſtrike my eyes: to awaken my attention, ſome new, unknown object muſt ſuddenly and forcibly ſtrike my ſight. Unleſs ſuch an impreſſion occur, I walk on without perceiving the ſenſations that ſtrike me.

If, on the contrary, in the calm of my deſires, I range through the ſame place, then, ſenſible to all the beauties of nature and art by which it is embelliſhed, my ſoul being open to every impreſſion, will participate of all it receives. I ſhall not indeed be endowed with that keen and piercing look with which the lover, and the ambitious behold every object that affects them. I ſhall not like them ſee what is only viſible to the eyes of the paſſions. I ſhall be leſs acutely, but more generally ſenſible. Let a man of pleaſure and a botaniſt walk by the ſide of a river, ſhaded by ſtately oaks, and bordered by ſhrubs and odoriferous flowers. The firſt of them affected merely by the limpidity of the ſtream, the beauty of the oaks, the variety of the ſhrubs, and the fragancy of the flowers, will not ſee them with the eyes of the botaniſt: he will not obſerve the uniformity and variety among theſe ſhrubs and flowers. Having no intereſt to remark them, he will want the attention to perceive them; he will receive the ſenſations from his judgment, but have no remembrance of them. It is the botaniſt, anxious for his reputation, the ſcrupulous obſerver of theſe various flowers and ſhrubs, that

can alone make himſelf attentive to the different ſenſations he feels, and the different judgments he forms.*

For the reſt, the conſciouſneſs or unconſciouſneſs of ſuch impreſſions, change not their nature; it is therefore true, as I have already ſaid, that all our ſenſations carry with them a judgment, whoſe exiſtence, though unnoticed when they fix not our attention, is however not the leſs real.

It reſults from the contents of this chapter, that all judgments formed by comparing objects with each other, ſuppoſes an intereſt in us to compare them. Now that intereſt, neceſſarily founded on our love of happineſs, cannot be any thing elſe than the effect of bodily ſenſibility; becauſe all our pleaſures, and all our pains have their ſource from thence. This queſtion being diſcuſſed, I conclude that corporeal pains and pleaſures are the unknown principles of all human actions †.

* There is in fact no remembrance without attention, nor any attention without intereſt.

† Mr. Rouſſeau, in ſeveral parts of his Emilius, denies that bodily ſenſibility is the principle of all human actions, but the reaſons on which he founds his denial, ſhew that he has not ſeriouſly reflected on the queſtion.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Corporeal ſenſibility is the ſole cauſe of our actions, our thoughts, our paſſions, and our ſociability.

ACTION.

It is to clothe himſelf, and adorn his miſtreſs, or his wife, to procure them amuſements, nouriſh himſelf and his family, in a word to enjoy the pleaſures attached to the gratification of bodily deſires, that the artizan and the peaſant thinks, contrives, and labours. Corporeal ſenſibility is therefore the ſole mover of man *, he is conſe-

* What they call intellectual pain, or pleaſure, may be always referred to ſome bodily pain or pleaſure. Two examples will make this evident.

What makes us fond of gaming, even for trifles? Is it the agreeable ſenſations we then feel? No: we love it becauſe it relieves us from the diſguſtful ſtate of being weary of ourſelves, and delivers us from that abſence of impreſſion which always produces diſcontent, and a bodily uneaſineſs. What makes us love high play? The love of money. Why do we love money? From a taſte for conveniences, the want of amuſements, the deſire of avoiding bodily pains and procuring bodily pleaſures. Do we not beſide love the emotion that high gaming produces in us? Without doubt. But the emotion felt at the moment I loſe or gain a thouſand, two, or five you will, ten thouſand guineas, takes its ſource, either from the fear of being deprived of the pleaſures I poſſeſs, or the hope of enjoying thoſe that the increaſe of my fortune will procure me. Is not this emotion in ſome men the effect of pride alſo? There are men ſufficiently proud to be mortified when fortune forſakes them, though they play but for pins: but this ſort of pride is rare. Beſide, this ſame pride, as is proved in the Treatiſe of the Mind, ch. 13. diſc. 3. is

quently ſuſceptible, as I am going to prove, but of two ſorts of pleaſures and pains, the one

3. is no other than one of the effects of bodily ſenſibility. The principle of the love of play is therefore either the fear of diſguſt, and conſequently pain, or the hope of bodily pleaſure.

Is it the ſame with regard to the internal pleaſure we feel in ſuccouring the diſtreſſed, by performing an act of liberality? This is certainly a very lively pleaſure. Every action of this kind ſhould be praiſed by all, becauſe it is uſeful to all. But what is a benevolent man? One in whom a ſpectacle of miſery produces a painful ſenſation.

Born without ideas, without vice, and without virtue, every thing in man, even his humanity, is an acquiſition: it is to his education he owes this ſentiment. Among all the various ways of inſpiring him with it, the moſt efficacious is to accuſtom him from childhood, in a manner from the cradle, to aſk himſelf when he beholds a miſerable object, by what chance he is not expoſed in like manner to the inclemency of the ſeaſons, to hunger, cold, poverty, &c. When the child has been uſed to put himſelf in the place of the wretched; that habit gained, he becomes the more touched with their miſery, as in deploring their fate it is for human nature in general, and for himſelf in particular, that he is concerned. An infinity of different ſentiments then mix with the firſt ſentiment, and their aſſemblage compoſes the total of the ſentiment of pleaſure felt by a noble ſoul in ſuccouring the diſtreſſed: a ſentiment that he is not always in a ſituation to analyze.

We relieve the unfortunate,

1. To avoid the bodily pain of ſeeing them ſuffer.

2. To enjoy an example of gratitude, which produces in us at leaſt a confuſed hope of diſtant utility.

3. To exhibit an act of power, whoſe exerciſe is always agreeable to us, becauſe it always recalls to the mind the images of pleaſures attached to that power.

4. Becauſe the idea of happineſs is conſtantly connected, in a good education, with the idea of beneficence, and this beneficence in us conciliating the eſteem and affection of men, may, like riches, be regarded as a power, or means of avoiding pains and procuring pleaſures.

In

are preſent bodily pains and pleaſures, the other are the pains and pleaſures of foreſight or memory.

PAIN.

I know but two ſorts of pain, that we feel, and that we foreſee. I die of hunger; I feel a preſent pain. I foreſee that I ſhall ſoon die of hunger. I feel a pain by foreſight, the ſtrength of whoſe impreſſion is in proportion to the proximity and ſeverity of the pain. The criminal who is going to the ſcaffold, feels yet no torment, but the foreſight that makes his preſent puniſhment, is begun *.

In this manner, as from an affinity of different ſentiments, is made up the total ſentiment of the pleaſure we feel in the exerciſe of beneficence.

I have here ſaid enough, to furniſh a man of diſcernment with the means of decompoſing, in like manner, every other kind of pleaſure, called intellectual, and reducing it to mere ſenſation.

* There is no doubt but the foreſight in thoſe dreadful moments, makes men feel a painful bodily ſenſation. What is this foreſight? An effect of the memory. Now it is the property of the memory to put the organs, to a certain degree, into thoſe contractions that they would be more forcibly put, by the puniſhment itſelf. It is evident, therefore, that all pains and pleaſures eſteemed interior, are ſo many bodily ſenſations, and that we cannot underſtand by the words interior and exterior, any thing but impreſſions excited by the memory, or by the actual preſence of objects.

REMORSE.

REMORSE.

Remorſe is nothing more than a foreſight of bodily pain, to which ſome crime has expoſed us: and is conſequently the effect of bodily ſenſibility. We tremble at the deſcription of the flames, the wheels, the fiery ſcourges, that the heated imagination of the painter or the poet repreſents. Is a man without fear, and above the law? he feels no remorſe from the commiſſion of a wicked action; provided, however, that he have not previouſly contracted a virtuous habit; for then he will not purſue a contrary conduct, without feeling an uneaſineſs, a ſecret inquietude, to which is alſo given the name of remorſe. Experience tell us, that every action which does not expoſe us to legal puniſhment, or to diſhonour, is an action performed in general without remorſe *. Solon and Plato loved women and even boys, and avowed it †. Theft was not puniſhed in Sparta:

* If diſhonour, or the contempt of mankind be inſupportable, it is becauſe it preſages evils, as it in part deprives us of the advantages that ariſe from the union of men in ſociety: for contempt implies a want of attention in mankind to ſerve us, and preſents the time to come as void of pleaſures, and filled with pains; which are all reducible to bodily ſenſation.

† The Gauls were anciently divided into a great number of clubs, or particular ſocieties, that were compoſed of about a dozen families, the women of which were in common. They lived among themſelves without remorſe, but no one dared to have a paſſion for a woman belonging to another club;

and the Lacedæmonians robbed without remorſe. The princes of the Eaſt can, with impunity, load their ſubjects with taxes, and they do it effectually. The inquiſitor can with impunity, burn whoever does not think as he does, on certain metaphyſical points, and it is without remorſe that he gluts his vengeance by hideous torments, for the ſlight offence that is given to his vanity by the contradiction of a Jew or an Infidel. Remorſe, therefore owes its exiſtence to the fear of puniſhment or of ſhame, which is always reducible, as I have already ſaid, to a bodily ſenſation.

FRIENDSHIP.

It is in like manner, from bodily ſenſibility, the tears flow that bathe the urn of my friend. I lament the loſs of the man whoſe converſation relieved me from diſquietude, from that diſagreeable ſenſation of the ſoul, which actually produces a bodily pain: I deplore him who expoſed his life and fortune to ſave me from ſorrow and deſtruction; who was inceſſantly employed in promoting my felicity, and increaſing it by every ſort of pleaſure. When a man enters into himſelf, when he examines the bottom of his ſoul, he perceives nothing in all theſe ſentiments but the develop-

club: the law forbade it, and remorſe begins where impunity ends.

ment

ment of bodily pain and pleaſure. What cannot this pain produce? It is by this mean the magiſtrate enchains vice, and diſarms the aſſaſſin.

PLEASURE.

There are two ſorts of pleaſures, as there are two ſorts of pains: the one is the preſent bodily pleaſure, the other is that of foreſight. Does a man love fine ſlaves and beautiful paintings? If he diſcover a treaſure he is tranſported. He does not, however, yet feel any bodily pleaſure, you will ſay: it is true; but he gains at that moment, the means of procuring the objects of his deſires. Now this foreſight of an approaching pleaſure, is in fact an actual pleaſure: for without the love of fine ſlaves and paintings, he would have been entirely unconcerned at the diſcovery of the treaſure.

The pleaſures of foreſight, therefore, conſtantly ſuppoſe the exiſtence of the pleaſures of the ſenſes. It is the hopes of enjoying my miſtreſs to-morrow that makes me happy to-day. Foreſight or memory convert into an actual enjoyment the acquiſition of every means proper to procure pleaſure. From what motive in fact do I feel an agreeable ſenſation every time I obtain a new degree of eſteem, of importance, riches, and above all, of power? It is becauſe I eſteem power as the moſt ſure means of increaſing my happineſs.

POWER,

POWER.

Men love themſelves: they all deſire to be happy, and think their happineſs would be complete, if they were inveſted with a degree of power ſufficient to procure them every ſort of pleaſure. The love of power therefore takes its ſource from the love of pleaſure.

Suppoſe a man abſolutely inſenſible. But, it will be ſaid, he muſt then be without ideas, and conſequently a mere ſtatue. Be it ſo: but allow that he may exiſt, and even think. Of what conſequence would the ſcepter of a monarch be to him? None. In fact, what could the moſt immenſe power add to the felicity of a man without feeling.

If power be ſo coveted by the ambitious, it is as the mean of acquiring pleaſure. Power is like gold, a money. The effect of power, and of a bill of exchange is the ſame. If I be in poſſeſſion of ſuch a bill, I receive at London or Paris a hundred thouſand crowns, and conſequently all the pleaſures that ſum can procure. Am I in poſſeſſion of a letter of authority or command? I draw in like manner from my fellow-citizens, a like quantity of proviſions or pleaſures. The effects of riches and power are in a manner the ſame: for riches are power.

In

In a country where money is unknown, in what manner can taxes be paid? In the natural ſtate, that is, in corn, wine, cattle, fowls, &c.—How can commerce be carried on? By exchange. Money therefore is to be regarded as a portative merchandiſe, which it is agreed on, for the facility of commerce, to take in exchange for all other ſorts of merchandiſe. Can it be the ſame with the dignities and honours with which poliſhed nations recompenſe the ſervices rendered their country? Why not? What are honours? A money that is in like manner the repreſentative of every kind of proviſion and pleaſure. Suppoſe a country where the honorary money is not current; ſuppoſe the people to be too free, and too haughty, to ſuffer a very great inequality in the ranks and authority of the people: in what manner muſt that nation recompenſe great actions, and ſuch as are uſeful to the nation? By natural riches and pleaſures, that is, by transferring a certain quantity of corn, beer, hay, wine, &c. to the granary and cellar of the hero: by giving him ſo many acres of land to till, or ſo many handſome ſlaves. It was by the poſſeſſion of Briſeis *, that the

* In the iſland of Rimini, no man can marry that has not killed an enemy, and borne away his head. The conqueror of two enemies has a right to marry two wives, and ſo on to fifty. What could be the cauſe of ſuch an eſtabliſhment? The ſituation of theſe Iſlanders, who being ſurrounded by nations that were their enemies, would not have been able to reſiſt them,

Greeks recompenced the valour of Achilles. What among the Scandinavians, the Saxons, the Scythians, the Celts, the Samnites, and the Arabs *, was the recompence of courage, of talents and virtues? Sometimes a fine woman, and ſometimes a banquet, where feaſting on delicate viands, and carouſing delightful liquors, the warriors with tranſport liſtened to the carols of the bards.

It is therefore evident, that if money and honours be, among moſt poliſhed nations, the rewards of virtuous actions, they are in that caſe the repreſentative of the ſame poſſeſſions, and the ſame pleaſures that poor and free nations grant to their heroes, and for the acquiſition of which thoſe heroes expoſe themſelves to the greateſt dangers. Therefore, on the ſuppoſition, that theſe dignities and honours were not the repreſentatives of wealth or pleaſures, that they were nothing more than empty titles †; thoſe titles being eſtimated accord-

them, if they had not perpetually excited the courage of their people by the higheſt rewards.

* Among the preſents the caravans at this day make to the Arabs of the Deſert, the moſt agreeable are nubile virgins. This was the tribute the victorious Saracens formerly demanded of the conquered. Abderama, after the conqueſt of the Spaniards, exacted of the petty prince of the Aſturias, the annual tribute of a hundred beautiful virgins.

† If in deſpotic nations the ſpring of glory be commonly very weak, it is, becauſe glory there does not confer any ſort of power, becauſe all power is abſorbed in deſpotiſm; becauſe in thoſe countries a hero, covered with glory, is not ſecure from the intrigues of a villanous courtier; becauſe he has no certain property in his effects, or his liberty; becauſe,

ing to their real value, would preſently ceaſe to be the objects of deſire. To enter a breach, a crown piece, the repreſentative of a pint of brandy, and the enjoyment of a ſutleress, muſt be given to the ſoldier. The warriors of antiquity, and thoſe of the preſent day are the ſame *. Men have not changed their nature, and they will always perform nearly the ſame actions for the ſame rewards. If a man be ſuppoſed indifferent to pleaſure and pain, he will be without action: unſuſceptible of remorſe, or friendſhip, or, in ſhort, of the love of riches or of power: for when we are inſenſible to pleaſure itſelf, we muſt be inſenſible

in ſhort, he is liable, at the pleaſure of his ſovereign, to be thrown into a priſon, be deprived of his wealth and honours, and even of life itſelf.

Why does the Engliſhman behold, in the greateſt part of foreign noblemen, nothing more than gaudy valets and victims adorned with garlands? Becauſe a peaſant in England, is in fact greater than an officer of ſtate in another country: the peaſant is free; he can be virtuous with impunity; and ſees nothing above him but the law.

It is the deſire of glory that muſt be the moſt powerful principle of action in poor republics: and it is the love of money, founded on the love of luxury, that in deſpotic countries is the principle of action, and the moving power in nations ſubject to that ſort of government.

* The eruption of Brennus into Italy, it is well known, was not the firſt, but the fifth made by the Gauls. Belloveſus had made a deſcent there before him; and how did this chief perſuade his countrymen to follow him over the Alps? By ſhowing them the wine of Italy. "Taſte this wine, he cried, "and ſee if you like it? If you do, follow me, and conquer the "country that produced it."

to

to the means of acquiring it. What we ſearch for in riches and power, is the means of avoiding bodily pains, and procuring bodily pleaſures. If the acquiſition of gold and power be always a pleaſure, it is becauſe foreſight and memory convert into an actual pleaſure all the means of obtaining it.

The general concluſion of this chapter, is, that in man all is ſenſation: a truth of which I ſhall ſtill give a freſh proof, by ſhowing that his ſociability is nothing more than a conſequence of the ſame ſenſations.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Sociability.

MAN is by nature a devourer of fruits and of fleſh; but he is weak, unarmed, and conſequently expoſed to the voracity of animals ſtronger than himſelf. Man, therefore, to avoid the fury of the tyger and the lion, was forced to unite with man. The object of this union was to attack and kill other animals *, either to feed on them, or to prevent their conſuming the fruits and herbs that ſerved him for nouriſhment.

* There is, they ſay, in Africa, a ſort of wild dogs, that go in packs to make war on animals that are ſtronger than themſelves.

In the mean time mankind multiplied, and to ſupport themſelves, they were obliged to cultivate the earth; but to induce them to this, it became neceſſary to ſtipulate, that the harveſt ſhould belong to the huſbandman. For this purpoſe the inhabitants made agreements or laws among themſelves. Theſe laws made ſtrong the bonds of a union, that, founded on their wants, was the immediate effect of corporeal ſenſibility *. But cannot this ſociability be regarded as an innate quality †, a ſpecies of amiable morality? All that we learn from experience on this head, is, that in man, as in other animals, ſociability is the effect of want. If the deſire of defending themſelves

* Becauſe man is ſociable, they have concluded that he is good. But they have deceived themſelves. Wolves form ſocieties, but they are not good. We may add, that if man, as M. Fontenelle ſays, has made God after his own image, the horrible portrait he has drawn of the Divinity ought to make the goodneſs of man very equivocal. Hobbes has been reproached with this maxim: *The ſtrong child is a bad child*, he has however only repeated in other terms, this admired verſe of Corneille,

Qui peut tout ce qu'il veut, veut plus que ce qu'il doit.
He that can do whatever he will, wills more than he ought.

And this other verſe of Fontaine,

La raiſon du plus fort eſt toujours la meilleure.
The ſtrongeſt always reaſon beſt.

They who write the romance of man, condemn this maxim of Hobbes; they that write his hiſtory, admire it; and the neceſſity of laws proves it to be true.

† That curioſity, which certain writers regard as an innate principle, is the deſire in us of being happy, and of improving

makes the grazing animals, as horſes, bulls, &c. aſſemble in herds; that of chaſing, attacking, and conquering their prey, forms in like manner a ſociety of carnivorous animals, ſuch as foxes and wolves.

Intereſt and want are the principles of all ſociability. It is, therefore, theſe principles alone (of which few writers have given clear ideas) that unite men among themſelves: and the force of their union is always in proportion to that of habitude, and want. From the moment the young ſavage *, or the young bear, is able to provide for his nouriſhment and his defence, the one quits the hut, and the other the den of his parents †. The

ing our condition: it is no other than the development of corporeal ſenſibility.

* The greateſt part of travellers, ſay, that the attachment of the Negroes to their children, is ſimilar to that of brute animals to their offspring: this attachment ceaſes when they are able to provide for themſelves. See Melanges intereſſans des Voyages d'Aſia, d'Amérique, &c.

The Anxicos, ſays Draper on this head, in his voyage to Africa, eat their ſlaves: human fleſh is as common in their markets, as that of beef in ours. The father feaſts on the fleſh of his ſon, and the ſon on the fleſh of his father; brothers and ſiſters eat each other, and the mother without remorſe, feeds on the child ſhe has juſt brought into the world. In ſhort; the Negroes, ſays F. Labbat, have neither gratitude nor affection for their relations, or compaſſion for the ſick. Among theſe people, he adds, mothers are ſeen inhuman enough to abandon their children to the voracity of the tygers of the woods.

† Nothing is more common in Europe, than to ſee children deſert their parents, when they become old, infirm,

eagle, in like manner, drives away her young ones from the neſt, the moment they have ſufficient ſtrength to dart upon their prey, and live without her aid.

The bond that ties children to their parents, and parents to their children, is leſs ſtrong than commonly imagined. A too great ſtrength in this bond would be even fatal to ſocieties. The firſt regard of a citizen ſhould be to the laws, and the public proſperity. I ſpeak it with regret, filial affection ſhould be in man ſubordinate to the love of patriotiſm. If this laſt affection do not take place of all others, where ſhall we find a meaſure of virtue and vice? It would then be no more, and all morality would be aboliſhed.

For what reaſon, in fact, has juſtice and the love of God been recommended to men, above all things? Becauſe of the danger to which a too great love of their parents would expoſe them, has been in part perceived. If the exceſs of this paſſion be legitimated, if it be declared the principal attachment, a ſon would then have a right to rob his neighbour, or plunder the public trea-

incapable of labour, and forced to ſubſiſt by beggary: We ſee, in the country, one father nouriſh ſeven or eight children, but ſeven or eight children are not ſufficient to nouriſh one father. If all children be not ſo unnatural, if ſome of them have affection and humanity, it is to education and example they owe that humanity. Nature has made them diminutive bears.

ſure,

ſure, to ſupply the wants, and promote the comforts of his father. Every family would form a little nation, and theſe nations having oppoſite intereſts, would be continually at war with each other.

Every writer, who to give us a good opinion of his own heart, founds the ſociability of man on any other principle than that of bodily and habitual wants, deceives weak minds, and gives them a falſe idea of morality.

Nature, no doubt, deſigned that gratitude and habit ſhould form in man a ſort of gravitation, by which they ſhould be impelled to a love of their parents: but it has alſo deſigned that man ſhould have, in the natural deſire of independence, a repulſive power, which ſhould diminiſh the too great force of that gravitation*. Thus the daughter joyfully leaves the houſe of her mother to go to that of her huſband; and the ſon quits with pleaſure his native ſpot, for an employment in India, an office in a diſtant country, or merely for the pleaſure of travelling.

Notwithſtanding the pretended force of ſentiment, friendſhip, and habit, mankind change at Paris, every day, the part of the town, their acquaintance and their friends. Do men ſeek to

* Man hates dependence: from whence, perhaps, comes the hatred of his father and mother; and the proverb, founded on common and conſtant obſervation, that *the love of parents deſcends, and does not remount.*

make dupes? They exaggerate the force of ſentiment and friendſhip, they repreſent ſociability as *an innate affection or principle.* Can they, in reality, forget that there is but one principle of this kind, which is corporeal ſenſibility? It is to this principle alone, that we owe our ſelf-love, and the powerful love of independency: if men were, as they ſay, carried toward each other by a ſtrong and mutual attraction, would the heavenly Legiſlator have commanded them to love each other, and to honour their parents *? Would it not have left the care of it to nature, which without the aid of any law, obliges men to eat and drink when they are hungry and dry, to open their eyes to the light, and keep their hands out of the fire?

Travellers do not inform us that the love mankind have for their fellows, is ſo common as pretended. The ſailor, eſcaped from a wreck, and caſt on an unknown coaſt, does not run with open arms to embrace the firſt man he meets. On the contrary, he hides himſelf in a thicket, where he obſerves the manners of the inhabitants, and then preſents himſelf trembling before them.

But if an European veſſel chance to approach an unknown iſland, do not the ſavages, it is ſaid, run in crowds towards the ſhip? They are, with-

* The command to love our fathers and mothers, proves that the love of our parents is more the work of habit and education, than of nature.

out

out doubt, amazed at the ſight, they are ſtruck with the novelty of our dreſs, our arms and implements. The appearance excites their curioſity. But what deſire ſucceeds to this firſt ſenſation? That of poſſeſſing the objects of their admiration. They become leſs gay and more thoughtful; are buſied in contriving means to obtain, by force or fraud, the objects of their deſires: for that purpoſe they watch the favourable opportunity to rob, plunder, and maſſacre the Europeans, who, in their conqueſts of Mexico and Peru, gave them early examples of ſimilar injuſtice and cruelty.

The concluſion of this chapter is, that the principles of morality and politics, like thoſe of all other ſciences, ought to be eſtabliſhed on a great number of facts and obſervations. Now, what is the reſult of the obſervations hitherto made on morality? That the love of men for their brethren, is the effect of the neceſſity of mutual aſſiſtance, and of an affinity of wants, dependent on that corporeal ſenſibility, which I regard as the principle of our actions, our virtues, and our vices.

In perſevering in my opinion on this point, I think I ought to defend the Treatiſe on the Mind againſt the odious imputations of hypocriſy and ignorance.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

A juſtification of the principles admitted in the Treatiſe on the Mind.

WHEN the Treatiſe on the Mind appeared, the theologians regarded me as a corruptor of morals. They reproached me with having maintained, after Plato, Plutarch, and experience, that the love of women had ſometimes excited virtue in men.

The fact, however, is notorious: their reproach, therefore, is ridiculous. If bread, it has been ſaid to them, be a recompence for labour and induſtry, why not women*? Every object of deſire may become an encouragement to virtue, when it is not to be obtained but by ſervices done to our country.

* If hunger for bread be the principle of ſo many actions, and has ſo much power over men, how can we imagine that the deſire for women can have no effect on them? At the moment a youth is heated with the firſt fires of love, let its enjoyments be propoſed to him as the recompence of his application: let him be reminded, even in the arms of his miſtreſs, that it is to his talents and his virtues he owes her favours. The young man, docile, aſſiduous, virtuous, will then enjoy in a manner agreeable to his health, to his ſoul, and to the public good, the ſame delight that he would not enjoy, in another ſituation, without exhauſting his ſtrength, debaſing his mind, and diſſipating his fortune, by living in a ſtate of ſtupid ebriety.

In

In thoſe ages, when the invaſions of the Northern nations, and the incurſions of an infinity of plunderers, held the inhabitants always in arms, when the women being frequently expoſed to the inſults of the ravagers, were in continual want of protectors, the virtue then the moſt in eſteem was valour. The favours of the women, therefore, were the recompences of the moſt valiant, and conſequently every man ambitious of thoſe favours, endeavoured to elevate himſelf to that enthuſiaſtic courage, which about four centuries ſince animated the renowned knight-errants.

The love of pleaſure was therefore in thoſe ages the productive principle of the only virtue then known; that is, valour. When the manners changed, and a more improved policy ſet the timid virgin free from inſult, then beauty (for in government all things depend on each other) leſs expoſed to the outrages of the ravagers, held its defenders in leſs eſteem. If the enthuſiaſm of women for valour decreaſed then in proportion to their fear; if the eſteem preſerved to this day, for that ſort of courage be only the eſteem of tradition; if in this age the moſt young, aſſiduous, obſequious, and above all, the moſt opulent lover is commonly preferred, it is not ſurpriſing; all is as it ought to be.

The favours of women, therefore, according to the changes that happen in manners and governments, either are, or ceaſe to be, the encouragements

ments to certain virtues. Love in itſelf is no evil. Why ſhould we regard the pleaſures as the cauſe of the political corruption of manners? Men have had in all ages nearly the ſame wants, and in all ages have ſatisfied thoſe wants. The ages, or the nations moſt addicted to love, have been thoſe in which men were the ſtrongeſt and moſt robuſt. Edda, the Erſe poets, in ſhort, all hiſtory informs us, that the ages eſteemed heroic and virtuous, have not been the moſt temperate.

Youth are ſtrongly attracted by women: they are more eager after pleaſure than thoſe of riper years; they are, however, commonly more humane and virtuous, at leaſt more active, and activity is a virtue.

It was neither love nor pleaſures that corrupted Aſia, enervated the manners of the Medes, the Aſſyrians, Indians, &c. The Greeks, the Saracens, and Scandanavians, were neither more reſerved nor more chaſte than the Perſians and Medes, and yet the former have never been cited among effeminate nations.

If there be a time when the favours of women can become a principle of corruption, it is when they are venal *; when money, riſing from being the recompence of merit and talents, becomes that of intrigue and flattery; in ſhort, when a ſatrap or a

* *It may be aſked by ſome, perhaps, when the time was that the favours of women were not venal?*

nabob

nabob can, by means of injuſtice and crimes, obtain from the ſovereign the right of pillaging the people, and applying the ſpoil to his own emolument.

It is with women as with honours, they are the common objects of the deſire of men: if honours be the price of iniquity; if to attain them the great muſt be flattered; if the weak muſt be ſacrificed to the powerful, and the intereſt of a nation to that of a ſultan; then honours, ſo juſtly invented as a recompence and decoration of merit and talents, become the ſource of corruption. Women, like honours, may, therefore, according to times and the manners, become the alternate encouragements to vice or virtue.

The political corruption of manners therefore conſiſts only in the depravation of the means employed to procure pleaſures. The rigid moraliſt who preaches inceſſantly againſt pleaſures, is nothing more than the echo of his ghoſtly father. How can we extinguiſh every deſire in man without deſtroying every principle of action? He who is affected by no intereſt, can have no motive to produce any action worthy a man.

CHAP. X.

The pleaſures of the ſenſes are, in a manner even unknown to nations themſelves, their moſt powerful motives.

THE ſprings of action in man are corporeal pains and pleaſures. Why is hunger the moſt habitual principle of his activity? Becauſe among all his wants it is that which returns the moſt frequently and commands the moſt imperiouſly. It is hunger and the difficulty of appeaſing it, that give to the carniverous animals of the foreſt ſo much ſuperiority of intellect over the grazing herds. It is hunger that furniſhes the former with a hundred ingenious methods of attacking and ſurpriſing their game. It is hunger that keeps the ſavages for ſix months together on the lakes, and in the woods: teaches them to bend the bow, to weave their nets, and ſet the ſnares for their prey. It is hunger alſo that among the poliſhed nations puts the people in action, teaches them to cultivate the land, learn an artful trade, and fill a difficult employ. But in the exerciſe of theſe employs each one forgets the motive that made him undertake it; for the mind is occupied, not with the want, but with the means of appeaſing it. The difficulty is not to eat, but to provide the repaſt.

Pleaſure

Pleaſure and pain are, and always will be, the only principles of action in man.* If heaven had provided for all his wants; if nouriſhment proper for the body had been, like air and water, an element of nature, man would have been for ever wrapt up in ſloth.

Hunger, and conſequently pain, is the principle of activity in the poor, that is of the greateſt number: and pleaſure is the principle of activity in thoſe who are above indigence, that is, the rich. Now, among all the pleaſures, that which without doubt acts the moſt forcibly on us, and communicates the greateſt energy to the ſoul, is the love of women. Nature, by attaching the greateſt intoxication to the enjoyment of them, intended

* If wants be our only motives, it muſt then be to them we owe the invention of arts and ſciences. It is to that of hunger we are indebted for the art of tilling the ſoil, of forging the plow-ſhare, &c. It is to the neceſſity of defending ourſelves againſt the rigour of the ſeaſons we owe the art of building, of providing ourſelves with apparel, &c.

As to what concerns the magnificence of equipages, dreſs, and furniture, with regard to muſic, theatres, in a word, all the arts of luxury, it is to love, to the deſire of pleaſing, and the fear of diſguſt, that we are in like manner to attribute the invention. Without love what arts would have yet been unknown! What a ſtupidity would there be in nature! Men without wants would be without the principle of action: it is to the want of pleaſure that youth owe, in part, their activity, and the ſuperiority they have, in that reſpect, over thoſe of a more advanced age.

to make them one of the moſt powerful principles of our activity *.

* There are among the learned, they ſay, thoſe who condemn themſelves to live in a retreat, far from the world. Now, how can we perſuade ourſelves, that in theſe the love of talents is founded on the love of corporeal pleaſures, and above all that of women? How can we reconcile theſe contradictions? By ſuppoſing it may be with a man of talents as with a miſer: if he deprive himſelf of neceſſaries to-day, it is with the hope of enjoying ſuperfluities to-morrow. Does the miſer wiſh for a fine ſeat, and the man of talents for a fine woman? If to attain theſe be required great riches, and a great reputation, theſe two men will labour to increaſe, the one his riches, and the other his renown. Now, if during the time employed in the acquiſition of the money and the fame, they ſhould grow old, and contract habits that they cannot break, without efforts of which age has rendered them incapable; the miſer and the man of talents will then die, the one without his houſe, and the other without his miſtreſs.

It is not only between theſe two men, but alſo between the coquet, and the ſame miſer, that we find an infinity of ſimilitudes. Each of them are more happy than is imagined, and each in the ſame manner. The miſer, when counting his money, enjoys the approaching poſſeſſion of every object that may be had in exchange for gold: and the coquet admiring herſelf in her glaſs, enjoys in like manner by anticipation all the homage that her beauty and graces can procure. I would adviſe theſe two to ſtop where they are, and not procure either a ſeat or lovers; for they will find, in the enjoyments of thoſe objects of their deſires, a diſguſt of which they are at preſent ignorant.

The ſtate of deſire is a ſtate of pleaſure. Houſes, lovers, and women, that riches, beauty and talents can procure, are pleaſures of foreſight, certainly leſs poignant, but more durable than real and corporeal pleaſures. The body ſoon becomes exhauſted: the imagination never. So that of all our pleaſures, the latter are thoſe, in general, that give us, in the total of life, the greateſt ſum of happineſs.

No

No paſſion produces greater changes in man: its empire extends even to brutes. The timid animal that trembles at the approach of another that is even weaker than itſelf, becomes animated by love. At the command of love he ſtops, ſhakes off every fear, attacks and defeats his equals, or even his ſuperiors in ſtrength. There are no dangers, no labours by which love can be diſmayed. It is the ſpring of life. In proportion as its deſires die away, man loſes his activity; and by degrees, death deprives him of every other ſenſation.

Corporeal pleaſure and pain are the real and only ſprings of all government. We do not properly deſire glory, riches and honours, but the pleaſures only of which glory, riches, and honours are the repreſentatives; and whatever men may ſay, while we give the workman money that he may drink, to excite him to labour, we muſt acknowledge the power that the pleaſures of the ſenſes have over us.

When I ſaid, in the Treatiſe of the Mind, that it is from the ſtalk of corporeal pleaſure and pain, that we gather all our joys and our pains, I publiſhed an important truth.—What follows? That it is not in the enjoyment of theſe ſame pleaſures the political depravation of manners can conſiſt. Who in fact are a corrupted and effeminate people? They who acquire by vicious means the

ſame pleaſures that illuſtrious nations acquire by virtuous means.

The declamations of certain moraliſts will never prove any thing againſt an author, whoſe principles are juſtified and confirmed by experience.

Let not this diſcuſſion of corporeal ſenſibility be regarded as foreign to my ſubject. What have I propoſed? To ſhow that all men, equally well organiſed, have an equal diſpoſition for underſtanding. What have I done toward it? I have diſtinguiſhed between the mind or underſtanding, and the ſoul: I have proved, that the ſoul is in us nothing but the faculty of ſenſation; that the mind is the effect of it: that in man all is ſenſation; that, conſequently, corporeal ſenſibility is the principle of his wants, his paſſions, his ſociability, his ideas, his judgments, his deſires, and his actions; and that, in ſhort, if all things can be explained by corporeal ſenſibility, it is uſeleſs to admit of any other faculty in us *.

Man is a machine, that being put in motion by corporeal ſenſibility, ought to perform all that it executes. It is the wheel, that moved by a tor-

* Beſide the faculty of ſenſation, man, they ſay, is endowed with that of remembrance. I know it: but as the organ of the memory is corporeal, as its office conſiſts in recalling impreſſions that are paſt, and as for that effect it muſt excite in us actual ſenſations; I am not the leſs authoriſed to aſſert, that in man all is ſenſation.

rent,

rent, raiſes the piſtons, and with them the water deſigned to be thrown into the baſon prepared to receive it.

After having thus ſhown that all in us is reducible to ſenſation and remembrance, and that our ſenſations are produced by the five ſenſes only; to diſcover next if a greater or leſs underſtanding be the effect of a greater or leſs perfection of the organs, we muſt examine, if in fact, the ſuperiority of the mind or underſtanding be always in proportion to the acuteneſs of the ſenſes, and the extent of the memory. If experience prove the contrary, there is no doubt but that the uſual inequality of minds muſt proceed from another cauſe.

It is, therefore, to the ſole examination of this fact, the queſtion propoſed is now reduced, and it is to this examination we ſhall owe its ſolution.

CHAP. XI.

Of the unequal extent of the memory.

I SHALL here only repeat what I have ſaid in the book on the Mind, and ſhall obſerve:

1. That the Hardouins, the Longuerues, the Scaligers, in ſhort all the prodigies of memory, have commonly had but little genius, and that they are never placed in the ſame rank with Machiavel, Newton, and Tacitus *.

2. That to make diſcoveries of any kind, and deſerve the title of inventor, or man of genius; if we muſt, as Deſcartes has proved, meditate more than learn, a man may have a great memory, without a great underſtanding †.

* *So Pope in his Eſſay on Criticiſm,*

As on the land while here the ocean gains,
In other parts it leaves wide ſandy plains;
Thus in the ſoul while memory prevails,
The ſolid pow'r of underſtanding fails;
Where beams of warm imagination play,
The memory's ſoft figures melt away.

This ſeems to be a vulgar error; a ſtrong memory and a fertile invention frequently go together, the former being of the utmoſt utility to the latter. If a man ſhall ſit down to invent, he will find that a complete retroſpect of all he has ſeen, heard or read, relative to any ſcience, will afford him the greateſt aſſiſtance in his further inventions or improvements in that ſcience.

† A great memory makes a great ſcholar; meditation makes the man of genius. The original mind, the mind of a peculiar

He who would acquire a great memory, ſhould improve it by daily practice. He that would acquire a certain habit of meditation, ſhould in like manner improve it by daily exerciſe. Now the time ſpent in meditation, is not employed in ſtoring up facts in the memory. The man who compares and meditates much, has therefore commonly the leſs memory, as he makes the leſs uſe of it. Of what uſe, moreover, is a great memory? The moſt common will anſwer the purpoſe of a great man. He who underſtands his own language, has already a great number of ideas. To merit the title of a man of underſtanding, what is he to do? Compare his ideas with each other, and by that mean obtain ſome concluſion new and intereſting, either by being uſeful or agreeable. The memory charged with all the words of a language,

liar turn, ſuppoſes a compariſon of objects with each other, and a diſcernment of relations unknown to ordinary men. It is not ſo with the man of the world: his mind is compoſed of taſte and memory. He who knows the moſt remarkable paſſages in hiſtory, the moſt bons mots, and curious anecdotes, is the moſt agreeable companion. Newton, Locke, and Corneille, were underſtood by few. The man of profound penetration is not adapted to the multitude. If the man of the world be not a ſublime poet, a fine painter, a profound philoſopher, or great general, he is at leaſt quite amiable. If his reputation do not extend beyond the circle of his acquaintance, it is becauſe he does not write, does not improve any ſcience, and render himſelf uſeful to mankind, and therefore ought not to expect much eſteem.

and conſequently with all the ideas of a people, is like a palet charged with a certain number of colours: the painter has on that palet the matter of an excellent picture; it is for him ſo to uſe and diſpoſe them, that they may produce a great truth in the ſhades, and a great force of colouring, in a word, a beautiful painting.

A common memory has even more extent than is imagined. In Germany and England there is ſcarce a man of education, who does not underſtand three or four languages *. Now if the ſtudy of thoſe languages be compriſed in the common plan of education, it cannot ſuppoſe any thing more than a common organiſation: all men are therefore endowed by nature with more memory than is requiſite to inveſtigate the greateſt truths †. From

* If the French underſtand no language but their own, it is the effect of their education, and not their organiſation; let them paſs ſome years at London or Florence, and they will eaſily underſtand Engliſh or Italian.

† Nature, they ſay, has given to every nation ſome peculiar quality or genius. There is no nation in Europe that has not made ſome ſucceſsful alterations in their military exerciſes and evolutions, after the Pruſſians. But too much ſtruck with the brilliancy of theſe evolutions, have theſe nations cultivated the means of exciting courage in their ſoldiers? I doubt it. The Europeans have not the ſame motives to expoſe their lives in battle, that the Greeks and Romans had: and conſequently, the courage of armies does not ſhow itſelf in enterprizes equally hazardous; and may be reduced, perhaps, in every warrior, to the ſole principle of not being the firſt to run away.

whence

whence I infer, that if the ſuperiority of the mind conſiſts principally, as Mr. Hobbes remarked, in the knowledge of the true ſignification of words, and if there be no man who in reflecting on thoſe of his own language only, would not find more queſtions to diſcuſs than he could reſolve in the courſe of a long life, no man can complain of his memory. There are, they ſay, quick and ſlow memories: we have in fact, a quick remembrance of the words of our own language, and a more ſlow remembrance of thoſe of a foreign tongue; eſpecially, if we ſpeak it but ſeldom. But what can we conclude from hence? Only that we have a remembrance of objects more or leſs prompt, according as they are more or leſs familiar to us. There is but one real and remarkable difference in memories, which is the inequality of their extent. Now, if all men equally well organiſed, are, as I have proved, endowed with a memory ſufficient to exalt them to the higheſt ideas, genius is then not the product of a great memory. Conſult on this ſubject, chap. iii. diſc. iii. of the Treatiſe on the Mind. I have there conſidered this queſtion in every light. My opinion appears to have been generally adopted, becauſe experience has confirmed its truth, and proved, that in general, it is not to the defect of the memory we ought to refer the imperfection of the mind or underſtanding.

Does it proceed from the unequal perfection of the other organs? I ſhall now examine that queſtion.———

CHAP. XII.

Of the unequal perfection of the organs of the ſenſes.

IF in men all be corporeal ſenſation, they do not then differ among themſelves, but in the degrees of their ſenſations. The five ſenſes are the organs of thoſe ſenſations; they are the paſſages by which ideas penetrate even to the ſoul. But are theſe paſſages equally open in all; and according to the different ſtructure of the organs of ſight, hearing, touching, taſte, and ſmell *, does not each man ought to ſmell, taſte, touch, ſee, and hear differently? Laſtly, ſhould not thoſe men who have the fineſt organs have the greateſt diſcernment †, and be, perhaps, the only men that can have it in any remarkable degree?

* Let it not be ſuppoſed, however, that there is an extreme difference in the common organiſation of men. All have not the ſame ear, yet in a concert, at certain tunes, all the muſicians, all the dancers in an opera, and all the ſoldiers of a battalion move equally in meaſure.

† Among men the moſt perfectly organiſed, if there be few of remarkable acuteneſs, it is, they ſay, becauſe the underſtanding is the conjunct effect of the fineneſs of the ſenſes, and of a good education. Be it ſo: but on this ſuppoſition it would be at leaſt impoſſible that a good education, without a peculiar and remarkable perfection of the ſenſes, could form a great man. Now this fact is diſproved by experience.

Experience

Experience, I anſwer, does not here agree with reaſon: it demonſtrates clearly that it is to the ſenſes we owe our ideas, but it does not demonſtrate that our diſcernment is always in proportion to the greater or leſs perfection of the ſenſes. Women, for example, who are of a more delicate texture than men, have more ſenſibility in the touch, but have not more underſtanding * than Voltaire, the man, perhaps, the moſt ſurpriſing of all others, for the fecundity, extent, and diverſity of his talents.

Homer and Milton were early blind. A blindneſs ſo premature ſhould imply ſome imperfection in the organ of ſight: yet how ſtrong and brilliant were their imaginations? A ſimilar obſervation may be made on M. Buffon; he is ſhort-ſighted: yet what mind more comprehenſive, and

* The organiſation of the two ſexes, is without doubt, in ſome reſpects very different: but is this difference to be regarded as the cauſe of the inferiority of the minds of women? No: on the contrary, it is evident, that no woman being organiſed as a man †, none of them conſequently ſhould have as much underſtanding. Now, can the genius of Sappho, Hyppathia, Elizabeth, Catherine II. &c. be eſteemed inferior to that of men? If women be in general inferior, it is becauſe in general they receive a ſtill worſe education. Compare together women of very different conditions, ſuch as princeſſes and chambermaids; I ſay, that theſe two ranks of women have commonly as much underſtanding as their huſbands. Why? Becauſe the two ſexes have here received an education equally bad.

† *Will this be allowed, as to what regards the ſenſibility of the organs? Are there not many women of a more robuſt organiſation than the generality of men?*

what

what ſtyle more beautiful *. Among thoſe who have the ſenſe of hearing in the greateſt perfection, are there any ſuperior to the St. Lamberts, the Saurins, the Nivernois, &c. Of thoſe who have the ſenſes of taſting and ſmelling in the greateſt perfection, are there any who have more genius than Diderot, Rouſſeau, Marmontel, Duclos, &c.? In whatever manner we interrogate experience, it will conſtantly anſwer, that the greater or leſs ſuperiority of mind is independent of the greater or leſs perfection of the organs of the ſenſes, and that all men equally well organiſed, are endowed by nature with a fineneſs of the ſenſes ſufficient to lead them to the greateſt diſcoveries in mathematics, chymiſtry, politics, phyſics, &c. †.

* It has not been remarked, that in the greateſt painters, the ſenſe of ſeeing is much more acute than that of other men.

† If a greater or leſs underſtanding depends on the greater or leſs fineneſs of the ſenſes, it is probable that the different temperatures of the air, the difference of latitudes and aliments, muſt have ſome influence on minds, and conſequently that the country moſt favoured by heaven ſhould produce the moſt ingenious inhabitants. Now, how can we imagine, that from the beginning of time to the preſent day, the inhabitants of ſuch country muſt not have acquired a remarkable ſuperiority over other nations? That they muſt not have invented the beſt laws, and conſequently have been the beſt governed? That they muſt not in the courſe of time have ſubdued the other nations, and in ſhort, have produced, in every claſs, the greateſt number of renowned men?

The generating climate of ſuch a people is hitherto unknown. Hiſtory does not point out any one among the nations endowed with a conſtant ſuperiority of underſtanding above all others;

If the ſublimity of the mind ſuppoſed ſo great a perfection in the organs, before a man is engaged in difficult ſtudies, before he entered, for example, in the career of letters or of politics, we ſhould examine if he have the eye of an eagle, the feeling of the ſenſitive plant, the noſe of the fox, and the ear of the mole.

Dogs and horſes, they ſay, are eſteemed more or leſs, according as they ſpring from this or that race. Therefore, before employing a man, we ſhould aſk if he ſprang from an ingenious or ſtupid father. Now theſe queſtions are never aſked; Why? Becauſe the moſt ingenious fathers frequently beget fooliſh children; becauſe men the beſt organiſed, have frequently but little underſtanding, and in ſhort, becauſe experience proves the inutility of ſuch queſtions: all it teaches us, is, that there are men of genius of every make, and every temperament, that neither the ſanguine,

It ſhows, on the contrary, that from Deli to Peterſburg, all nations have been ſucceſſively ignorant and enlightened: that in the ſame ſituations every people, as M. Robertſon remarks, have the ſame laws, and the ſame ſagacity, and that we find, for this reaſon, the manner of the ancient Germans among the modern Americans.

The difference of latitude and nouriſhment has therefore no influence on the minds of men, and perhaps it has leſs than is imagined on their bodies. In fact, the greateſt part of politicians in calculating the population of cities and empires from the number of deaths, have from thence obſerved, that, at leaſt in the greateſt part of Europe, the duration of life is nearly the ſame.

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the bilious, or phlegmatic, the great or little, the fat, the lean, the robuſt, the tender, the melancholic (2.) or the moſt ſtrong and vigorous, are always the moſt ingenious *.

But ſuppoſe a man to have extreme ſenſibility, what follows? That he will ſometimes have ſenſations unknown to the common rank of men: that he will feel what a leſs delicacy of organiſation will not permit another man to feel. But will he have more diſcernment? No: becauſe thoſe ſenſations, always fruitleſs till the moment they are compared with each other, will conſtantly preſerve the ſame relation to each other †. But, ſuppoſe the underſtanding to be proportionate to the fineneſs of the ſenſes; and that there are truths which cannot be comprehended but by ten or twelve men of the firſt organiſation. In this caſe the human mind would not be capable of perfectibility.

* M. Rouſſeau, p. 300 and 323 of his Emilius, ſays, "The "more hearty and robuſt a child grows the more judicious and "reſpectable he becomes. To enjoy the inſtruments of our in-"telligence, the body muſt be heathful and robuſt." A good conſtitution of body renders the operations of the mind eaſy and efficacious. But if M. Rouſſeau conſult experience, he will find, that the ſickly, the delicate, and the deformed, have as much underſtanding as the moſt vigorous, and well made. Witneſs Paſcal, Pope, Boilleau, and Scarron.

† A ſenſation of the memory is nothing but a fact the more, that may be replaced by another. Now a fact adds nothing to the aptitude men have to underſtanding, becauſe that aptitude is nothing elſe than the power of obſerving the relations that diverſe objects have to each other.

I may

I may alſo add, that theſe men ſo finely organiſed, would neceſſarily attain a degree of knowledge in the ſciences, that would be incommunicable to the common rank of men. Now, ſuch degree of knowledge has never been perceived.

There are no truths contained in the works of Locke and Newton, that are not now comprehenſible by all men of a common organiſation, and that have not any extraordinary excellence of taſting, ſmelling, ſeeing, hearing, and feeling.

I may alſo add, that as there is nothing ſimilar in nature *, among thoſe men who have the fineſt organiſation, each of them muſt be, in ſome reſpects, ſuperior to the reſt. Every man, therefore, muſt feel ſenſations, and acquire ideas that are incommunicable to his fellows. Now there are no ideas of this kind: whoever has ſuch as are clear, can eaſily communicate them to others.

* Does the diſſimilitude of beings exiſt in their principles, or in their developments? I know not: Of this we are certain, that the race of cattle become ſtronger or weaker, improve or degenerate, according to the goodneſs and abundance of their paſture, and the ſame we obſerve in oaks: when we ſee ſome ſhort, ſome tall, ſome ſtrait, and others crooked; in ſhort, no two trees that are abſolutely ſimilar; it is, perhaps, becauſe no two of them have received preciſely the ſame culture, or are placed in a ſimilar ſituation, are expoſed to the ſame wind, or planted in the ſame ſoil. Now, among inanimate beings, the time of their development anſwers to that of the education of man, which is, perhaps, never the ſame, becauſe, no two of them, as I have proved in the firſt ſection, can receive preciſely the ſame inſtructions.

There

There are, therefore, no ideas that men, commonly well organiſed, cannot attain.

The cauſes that would operate moſt efficaciouſly on minds, would be, without doubt, the differences of latitudes and nouriſhments. Now, as I have already ſaid, the groſs Engliſhman who feeds on butter and fleſh, and breathes a foggy air, has not certainly leſs underſtanding than the lean Spaniard, who lives on garlic and onions, in a very dry air. M. Shaw, an Engliſh phyſician, who from the fidelity and accuracy of his obſervations, as well as from the late date of his voyage into Barbary, deſerves our confidence, ſays, when ſpeaking of the Moors, "The ſmall progreſs this people "have made in the arts and ſciences, is not the "effect of incapacity or natural ſtupidity. The "Moors have an acute underſtanding, and even "genius. If they do not apply themſelves to the "ſtudy of the ſciences, it is becauſe being without motives to emulation, their government "does not leave them either liberty or leiſure ſufficient to cultivate and improve them. The "Moors, like the greateſt part of the Orientals, "being born ſlaves, are naturally enemies to all "labour that does not directly promote their preſent and perſonal intereſt."

It is liberty alone that can kindle among a people the ſacred fire of glory and emulation. If there be periods when, like thoſe rare birds brought into a country by a ſtorm of wind, great men

appear

appear on a ſudden in an empire, this apparition is not to be regarded as the effect of a phyſical, but a moral cauſe. In every government, where talents are rewarded, thoſe rewards, like the teeth of the ſerpent, planted by Cadmus, will produce men. If Deſcartes, Corneille, &c. rendered the reign of Lewis XIII. illuſtrious; Racine, Bayle, &c. that of Lewis XIV. Voltaire, Monteſquieu, Fontenelle, &c. that of Lewis XV. it is, becauſe the arts and ſciences were under theſe different reigns, ſucceſſively protected by Richelieu, Colbert, and the late duke of Orleans the regent. Great men, whatever has been ſaid, belong not to the reign of Auguſtus or Lewis XIV. but to the reign that protects them.

If any imagine that it is to the firſt fire of youth, to the freſhneſs of the organs, if I may ſo ſay, that we owe the fine compoſitions of great men; they deceive themſelves. Racine was but thirty, when he produced his Alexander, and his Andromache; but he was fifty, when he wrote Athalia, and the latter piece is certainly not inferior to the former *. It is not, moreover, a ſlight

* At the end of a certain number of years, a man is, they ſay, no longer the ſame compoſer. Voltaire at ſixty was no longer the Voltaire of thirty. Be it ſo; yet he was equally ſagacious. If two men, without being exactly ſimilar, can run as faſt, leap as high, ſhoot as true, and ſtrike a ball as far, the one as the other, they may, without being preciſely the ſame, have an equal underſtanding.

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indiſpoſition, which may occaſion a ſtate of health more or leſs delicate, that can extinguiſh genius.

We do not enjoy every year the ſame health; yet the lawyer gains or loſes every year nearly the ſame number of cauſes; the phyſician kills or cures nearly the ſame number of patients; and the man of genius, diſtracted neither by buſineſs nor pleaſure, by violent paſſions nor grievous maladies, produces every year nearly the ſame number of compoſitions.

Whatever difference there may be in the diet of nations, or the climate they inhabit; in a word, whatever difference there may be in their temperament *, it will not augment or diminiſh the aptitude that men have to underſtanding. It is not,

* The aptitude or diſpoſition for underſtanding or diſcernment, as I ſhall ſhow hereafter, is only an aptitude to diſcern the reſemblance or difference, the agreement or diſagreement between different objects. That the diverſity of temperaments and climates may occaſion a difference in the manners and inclinations of a people; that the ſavage hunters in the woody countries, would be herdſmen in a grazing country, may very well be: but it is not leſs true, that in every country the inhabitants conſtantly perceive the ſame relations between the ſame objects. So, from the moment that theſe wandering natives unite into nations, when the marſhes are dried up, and foreſts cut down, the diverſity of climates has had no ſenſible influence on their minds; and we, therefore, find in Sweden and Denmark, as accompliſhed geometricians, chymiſts, natural philoſophers, moraliſts, &c. as in Greece or Italy. "The "climate of Perſia, ſays Chardin, is the moſt proper to pro-"mote the vigour both of body and mind." Their climate, however, gives the Perſians no more genius than the French.

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therefore, on the ſtrength of the body *, or the juvenility of the organs, or the greater or leſs perfection of the ſenſes, that depends the greater or leſs ſuperiority of the underſtanding. To conclude, that experience demonſtrates the truth of this fact, is no great matter; I can alſo prove, that if this fact exiſts, it is becauſe it cannot exiſt otherwiſe, and alſo, that it is a cauſe hitherto unknown, that we muſt look for the explication of the phenomenon of the inequality of underſtandings.

To confirm the truth of this opinion, I think, that after having demonſtrated that in men all is ſenſation, we muſt conclude, that if they differ among themſelves, it conſtantly proceeds from the different degrees of their ſenſations only.

* If the ſuperiority of the mind be independent of the greater or leſs vigour of temperaments, and the greater or leſs fineneſs of the ſenſes, where ſhall we ſearch the cauſe of this ſuperiority? In the perfection of the interior organiſation they will ſay: but, I anſwer, if in a clock its interior perfection be ſhown by the preciſion with which it marks the hour, in man the perfection of his interior organiſation ſhows itſelf, in like manner, (at leaſt, ſo far as regards the underſtanding) by that of the five ſenſes, to which it owes all its ideas. The perfection of the exterior organiſation, ſuppoſes, therefore, that of the interior. But to prove that this laſt ſort of perfection can have no influence on the underſtanding, it will ſuffice to ſhow, (in conformity to experience) that its ſuperiority is intirely independent of the greater or leſs perfection of the five ſenſes.

CHAP. XIII.

On the different manner of receiving ſenſations.

MEN have different taſtes: but this difference may be either the effect of habit and education, or of the unequal ſenſibility of their organiſation. That the Negro, for example, feels more pleaſure in beholding the ſooty complexion of an African beauty, than in the roſes and lilies of an European, is in him the effect of habit. That men, according to the country they inhabit, are more affected with this or that ſort of muſic *, and become in conſequence ſuſceptible of particular impreſſions, is alſo the effect of habit. All taſtes that are factitious, and produced by the difference of education, are not here the objects of my inquiry; I here treat only of the

* *M. Rouſſeau in his Muſical Dictionary, relates a remarkable inſtance of this kind. There is, ſays he, among the Swiſs a tune they call Rans-des-Vaches, which was held ſo dear by them, that it was forbid, under pain of death, to play it among the Swiſs troops: for it made thoſe that heard it burſt into tears, deſert, or die, by exciting in them an ardent deſire again to ſee their native country. It is in vain to ſearch in this tune for ſuch energetic accents as are capable of producing ſuch wonderful effects. Theſe effects are never produced on ſtrangers, but proceed from habit, and by recalling to the minds of thoſe who hear this tune, their country, their youth, their former pleaſure, and ancient manner of living, from whence ariſes a piercing grief on reflecting that all theſe are no more.*

different

different taſtes produced by the mere different ſenſations felt at the preſence of the ſame object.

To know exactly what this difference is, we muſt have been ſucceſſively ourſelves and others. Now as this can never be, it is only by conſidering, with a very great attention, the diverſe impreſſions that the ſame objects appear to make on different men, that we can attain ſome diſcovery relative to this matter. If we examine this point cloſely we ſhall find, that if one ſaw ſquare what another ſaw round; that milk appeared white to one and red to another; that to ſome men a roſe ſeemed a thiſtle, and a well-proportioned man appeared a monſter, it would be impoſſible that men ſhould communicate their ideas, and underſtand each other: but they do underſtand each other; the ſame objects therefore excite in them nearly the ſame impreſſions.

To make this matter more clear, let us ſee in one and the ſame inſtance, in what men differ and reſemble each other.

They all reſemble each other in one point; and that is, they would all free themſelves from diſquietude: conſequently they would all be employed, and the more lively that employment, the more agreeable it is to them; provided, however, the impreſſion be not ſo pungent as to excite pain.

Men differ in this, that the degree of emotion which one regards as an exceſs of pleaſure, is

ſometimes in another the beginning of pain. The eye of my friend may be pained by a degree of light that gives me pleaſure; and yet we both agree that light is the moſt pleaſing object in nature. Now, from whence proceeds this uniformity of judgment, with this difference of ſenſation? From the inſignificance in the degree of difference, and becauſe a tender ſight finds the ſame pleaſure in a ſmall degree of light, that a ſtrong ſight does in the blaze of a mid-day ſun. Let us paſs from phyſics to morality, and we ſhall ſee ſtill leſs difference in the manner men are affected by the ſame objects, and I ſhall find, in conſequence, among the Chineſe * all our European proverbs: from whence I conclude, that the trivial differences in the organiſation of different people, ought not to be regarded; for in comparing the ſame objects every nation forms the ſame concluſions.

The invention of the ſame arts wherever there are the ſame wants, and where the arts have been equally encouraged by government, is another proof of the eſſential equality of minds. To confirm this truth, I may alſo cite the reſemblance obſerved in the laws and governments of different people. Aſia, ſays M. Poivre, peopled in a great

* Except in what has an immediate and peculiar relation to the oriental cuſtoms and government, there are no proverbs more ſimilar than thoſe of the Germans and the Chineſe.

part

part by the Malaccans, is governed by our ancient feudal laws. The inhabitants of Malacca, like our anceſtors, are not agricultors, but have like them a courage the moſt raſh and determined*. Courage, therefore, is not, as ſome ſtill aſſert, the effect of a particular organiſation in the Europeans. Men reſemble each other more than is commonly imagined. Where they differ it is in the degrees of their ſenſations. Poetry, for example, makes an agreeable impreſſion on almoſt every one. Every one repeats with almoſt equal enthuſiaſm, the hymn to light, that begins the third book of Paradiſe Loſt; but, they will ſay, if this paſſage admired by all is equally pleaſing to all, it is becauſe in painting the magnificent ef-

* If the Malaccans, ſays M. Poivre, had been nearer neighbours to China, that empire would have been ſoon conquered, and the form of its government changed. Nothing, ſays that author, equals the paſſions of the Malaccans for theft and plunder: but are they the only nation of thieves? Whoever reads hiſtory, finds, that this love of rapine is unhappily common to all men, and is rounded on their idleneſs. They are better pleaſed, in general, to live by plunder and incurſions, and by expoſing themſelves three or four months in the year to the greateſt dangers, than be ſubject to the daily labour of agriculture. But why then are not all nations thieves? Becauſe to plunder it is neceſſary to be ſituate near nations that have ſomething to loſe, that is ſuch as are agricultors and rich: if not, they have no choice but to labour or ſtarve.

Every country has it Malaccans. In the Roman catholic countries the clergy pillage, like them, the tenth of the harveſt: and what the Malaccans take by violence, the prieſts get by cunning, and by a panic terror.

fects of light, the poet makes uſe of a word, that by not expreſſing any particular degree of light, leaves every one at liberty to colour the objects with that tint of light which is moſt agreeable to his ſight. Be it ſo: but if light did not make a ſtrong and lively impreſſion on all, would it be univerſally regarded as the moſt admirable object in nature? Does not that vortex of fire in which almoſt all nations have placed the throne of the Divinity, prove the uniformity of impreſſions received at the preſence of the ſame objects *. Without this uniformity (which ſome philoſophers, not very accurate, have taken from the notion of the abſolute good and beautiful) on what foundation could the rules of taſte have been eſtabliſhed?

The ſimple and magnificent pictures of nature ſtrike all men. But do thoſe pictures make preciſely the ſame impreſſion on each of them? No: we learn, however, from experience, that the impreſſions are nearly ſimilar; ſo that objects extremely pleaſing to ſome are always more or leſs pleaſing to others. It is in vain to repeat here

* To prove the difference of ſenſations produced by the ſight of the ſame objects, they cite the inſtance of painters, who give a tinge of yellow or grey to all their figures; but if this defect in their colouring were an imperfection in the organ of ſight, and that all objects really appeared to them tinged with yellow and grey, the white on their palet would appear ſo alſo, and they would paint white though they ſaw grey.

that

that the uniformity of impreſſions produced by the beautiful deſcriptions of poetry, is merely apparent; that it is in part the effect of the uncertain ſignifications of words, and of a latitude in the expreſſions * that correſponds exactly to the various ſenſations felt by the aſpect of the ſame objects. Admitting the fact, it is ſtill true, that there are works generally eſteemed, and conſequently rules of taſte, the obſervation of which produces in all the ſenſations of beauty. If this queſtion be thoroughly examined, it will appear from the different manner in which men are affected by the ſame objects, that the difference of impreſſion ariſes more from their moral than their corporeal properties.

The reſult of this chapter is, that the diverſity of taſtes in men, ſuppoſes a ſmall difference only in the degrees of their ſenſations: that the uniformity of their judgments, proved by the uniformity of the proverbs of different nations; by the

* If I ſhould be aſked again why there are in every language ſo many words of indeterminate ſignification, I ſhould add to what I have ſaid on this ſubject in the 5th chapter of this ſection, that want preſided at the formation of languages; and that in the invention of words, men in endeavouring to communicate their ideas in the moſt facile manner, perceived, that if they made as many words as there are, for example, different degrees of magnitude, light, gravity, &c. their multiplicity would ſurcharge the memory: and that therefore it was neceſſary to ſuffer certain words to retain that vague ſignification, which renders their application more general, and the ſtudy of languages more conciſe.

reſemblance of their laws and governments; by the taſte that all have for poetry, and the ſimple and magnificent pictures of nature, demonſtrate that the ſame objects make nearly the ſame impreſſions on all men; and that if they differ, it is never but in the degrees of their ſenſations *.

CHAP. XIV.

That the ſmall difference perceived between our ſenſations has no influence on the underſtanding.

MEN at the preſence of the ſame objects can doubtleſs feel different ſenſations; but can they in conſequence perceive different relations between theſe ſame objects? No: and ſuppoſing, as I have elſewhere ſaid, that ſnow ſhould appear to ſome a degree whiter than to others, they would ſtill all agree that ſnow is the whiteſt of all bodies.

* If nature, as has been ſuppoſed, gives men ſuch unequal diſpoſition to underſtanding or diſcernment, why in the arts of dancing, muſic, painting, do the diſciples ſcarce ever equal their maſters ‡, and why does not the unequal diſpoſition in nature overbalance in the pupils the ſmall ſuperior degree of attention that the maſters perhaps exerciſe in the ſtudy of their art.

‡ *This will ſcarce be allowed. Raphael was the diſciple of Perugino, a name that would have been long ſince forgot, but for the tranſcendant accompliſhments of the ſcholar. Many ſimilar inſtances might be produced.*

In order that men ſhould perceive different relations between the ſame objects, thoſe objects muſt excite in them impreſſions of a nature altogether peculiar: that wood on fire ſhould freeze ſome, and that water condenſed by cold ſhould burn others; that all the objects of nature ſhould offer to each individual a chain of relations altogether different; and in ſhort, that men ſhould be with regard to each other what they are with regard to thoſe inſects whoſe eyes being conſtructed in a different manner, doubtleſs ſee objects under very different forms.

On this ſuppoſition individuals would have no analogy in their ideas and ſentiments. Men could neither communicate their knowledge, nor improve their reaſon, nor labour in common on the immenſe edifice of arts and ſciences. Now experience proves, that men make every day diſcoveries, and improve the arts and ſciences; therefore they perceive the ſame relations between objects.

The enjoyment of a fine woman may excite in the ſoul of my friend an intoxication of delight that it does not produce in mine; but that enjoyment is in both him and me the moſt poignant of all pleaſures. When two men receive a ſtroke of the ſame force, they feel perhaps two diſtinct impreſſions; but if the violence of the blow be doubled, tripled, quadrupled, the pain that each

of them feels will in like manner be doubled, tripled, quadrupled.

Suppoſe the difference of our ſenſations at the ſight of the ſame object to be more conſiderable than it really is, it is evident, that the objects preſerving the ſame relation to each other, would ſtrike us with a conſtant and uniform proportion. But, they will ſay, cannot this difference in our ſenſations change our moral affections, and cannot this change pro luce the difference and inequality in minds? I a ſwer, that all diverſity of affection * cauſed by any difference in the bodily organiſation, has not, as experience proves, any influence on the mind. We may therefore prefer either red or yellow, and ſtill be, like Delambert and Clairaut, an equally great geometrician: our palates may be unequally delicate, and we may be equally good poets, painters, or philoſophers. In ſhort we may with a taſte for ſour or ſweet, for milk or anchovies, be an equally great orator, phyſician, &c. All theſe taſtes in us are nothing more than unconnected and ſterile facts. It is the ſame with regard to our ideas, till the moment they are compared with each other. Now to give ourſelves the trouble of comparing them, we muſt be excited by ſome intereſt. But when men have this intereſt, and compare theſe ideas,

* The only affections that have any ſenſible effect on the mind, are thoſe that depend on education and prejudice.

why

why do they draw the ſame concluſions? Becauſe, notwithſtanding the difference of their affections, and the unequal perfection of their organs, they can all attain the ſame ideas. In fact, while the ſcale of proportions in which objects ſtrike us, is not broken, our ſenſations conſtantly preſerve the ſame relation to each other. A roſe of a very deep colour, when compared with another roſe, ſtill appears deep to every eye. We make the ſame judgments of the ſame objects. We can therefore always acquire the ſame number of ideas, and conſequently the ſame extent of underſtanding.

Men that are commonly well organized, are like certain ſonorous bodies, that without being exactly the ſame, ſtill yield the ſame number of ſounds *. It reſults from what has been here

* Certain bodies yield the ſame number of ſounds, but not thoſe of the ſame kind. It is the ſame with the mind. It preſents ideas or images equally fair, but different, according to the various objects with which chance has filled the memories.

Does my memory repreſent nothing but ſnow and ice, the tempeſts of the north, and the flames of Veſuvius or Etna? With theſe materials what picture can I compoſe? That of the mountains that defend the entrance of the garden of Armida. But if my memory, on the contrary, preſents none but ſmiling images, the flowers of ſpring, the ſilver waves, the moſſy ground, and fragrant orange groves, what ſhall I compoſe with theſe delightful objects? The bower to which love carried off Renaud. The ſpecies therefore of our ideas, and our imaginations, does not depend on the nature of our mind, which is the ſame in all men, but on the ſort of objects

objects

ſaid, that men always perceiving the ſame relations between the ſame objects, the unequal perfection of their ſenſes has no influence on their underſtanding. Let us make this truth more ſtriking by annexing a preciſe idea to the word Underſtanding.

CHAP. XV.

Of the Underſtanding or Judgment.

WHAT is the underſtanding in itſelf? An ability to diſcern the reſemblances and differences, the agreements and diſagreements that different objects have to each other. But what is in man the productive principle of his underſtanding? His corporeal ſenſibility, his memory, and eſpecially the intereſt he has to combine his ſenſations with each other *. The un-

jects that chance has engraved on our memories, and the intereſt we have to combine them.

* Suppoſe that in each ſcience and art, men had compared with each other all objects and all facts hitherto known, and that they had at laſt arrived at the diſcovery of all their ſeveral relations: men having then no new combinations to form, what we call judgment would no longer exiſt. Then all would be ſcience, and the human judgment being obliged to remain inactive, till the diſcovery of new facts gave it opportunity of comparing and combining them with each other, would be like an exhauſted mine that is ſuffered to repoſe till new veins are formed.

derſtanding

derſtanding or judgment is therefore in him nothing more than the reſult of the compariſon of his ſenſations; and a good judgment or underſtanding conſiſt in the juſtneſs of comparing them.

All men, it is true, do not feel preciſely the ſame ſenſations, but all perceive objects in a proportion conſtantly the ſame: all therefore have an equal aptitude to underſtanding or judgment*.

In fact, if, as experience proves, every man perceives the ſame relations between the ſame objects; if all of them agree in the truths of geometry; if, moreover, no difference in the degrees of their ſenſations change their manner of behold-

* It follows from this definition of the underſtanding, that if all its operations may be reduced to the obſerving the reſemblances and differences, the agreements and diſagreements that different objects have to each other, men are not, as has been often repeated, born with this or that particular genius.

The acquiſition of various talents is in men the effect of the ſame cauſe; that is to ſay, the deſire of glory, and the attention with which this deſire endows them. Now attention can be equally applied to all matters, to poetry, geometry, phyſics, painting, &c. as the hand of the organiſt can be indifferently applied to each ſtop of the organ. If it be aſked, why men have ſeldom different ſorts of genius? I anſwer, it is becauſe ſcience is in each kind, the firſt matter of the judgment; as ignorance is, if I may ſo ſay, the firſt matter of folly; and that men have rarely two ſorts of learning. There are few who join, like Buffon and Delambert, with the ſcience of a Newton or an Euler, the difficult art of a good writer. I ſhall not therefore ſay, with the old proverb, man is born a poet, and becomes an orator; but I aſſert, on the contrary, ſince all our ideas come by the ſenſes, that man is not born, but becomes what he is.

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ing objects; if (to give a corporeal example) the moment the ſun riſes out of the boſom of the ſea, all the inhabitants of the ſame coaſt, ſtruck at the ſame inſtant by the brilliancy of its rays, acknowledge it to be the moſt reſplendent object in nature; it muſt be confeſſed, that all men form, or may form, the ſame judgments on the ſame objects; that they may acquire the ſame truths *, and, in ſhort, that if all have not in fact equal judgment †, all have at leaſt an equal capacity for it, that is, an aptitude to acquire it ‡.——

* To acquire certain ideas, we muſt meditate. Is every one capable of it? Yes; when animated by a powerful intereſt. That intereſt then endows him with a force of attention, without which he may, as I have already ſaid, be a learned man, but never a man of judgment. It is meditation alone that can reveal to us thoſe firſt and general truths; the keys and principles of ſciences. It is to the diſcovery of theſe truths, that we always give the title of great philoſopher; becauſe, in every ſort of ſcience, it is always the univerſality of principles, the extent of their application, in a word, the greatneſs of the whole, that conſtitutes a philoſophic genius.

† There are ſome, as I have before ſaid, who attribute to the phyſical cauſe of the difference of latitudes, the difference in judgments. But to prove this fact, they muſt, after the definition here given of the judgment, be able to name a country, where the inhabitants do not perceive either the difference, the reſemblance, the agreement, or diſagreement of objects with each other, and with themſelves. Now, ſuch country is hitherto unknown.

‡ It is becauſe diſcernment is rare, that it is taken for a particular gift of nature. An alchymiſt, or a juggler, were extraordinary men, in the ages of ignorance: they were, therefore, taken for ſorcerers, and ſupernatural beings. It was not, however, from the great difficulty of ſurpriſing and duping ſo

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I ſhall not inſiſt any longer on this queſtion, but content myſelf with repeating, on this head, an obſervation I have already made in the Treatiſe on the Mind. Which is juſt.

If you preſent, I ſay, to ſeveral men a queſtion that is ſimple and clear, and concerning the truth of which they are indifferent; they will all form the ſame judgment *. Becauſe, they all perceive the ſame relations, between the ſame objects. All are, therefore, born with a juſt judgment. Now, it is with the term Juſt Judgment, as with that of Enlightened Humanity. Does this ſort of humanity

by illuſion and dexterity. The aſtoniſhment in this matter, is, that men can make a ſerious occupation of ſuch futile arts and illuſions. Now, it is the ſame with the judgment; if the aptitude to have it be common, nothing is ſo rare as a ſtrong and conſtant deſire to attain it. There are, they ſay, few men of genius: why? becauſe there are few governments that proportion the reward to the labour that the acquiſition of great talents is ſuppoſed to require.

In comparing alchymiſts and jugglers to men of diſcernment, my intention is not to degrade the latter by a humiliating compariſon: I mean only to ſhow the cauſe that has ſo long time paſt, made diſcernment be regarded as a gift of nature. I would deſtroy the marvellous, and not the merit of ſagacity: to it we owe the improvements in medicine, ſurgery, and in every art and ſcience that is uſeful. Nothing therefore, on the earth is more reſpectable than a ſound judgment; and, in conſequence, there is no nation rightly informed of its intereſt, that has not an eſteem for judgment, in proportion to the utility of the art or ſcience it improves.

* If men differ in opinion concerning the ſame queſtion, that difference is always the effect, either of their not underſtanding each other, or of their not having the ſame object preſent to their eyes, or their remembrance, or, becauſe being indifferent

condemn an aſſaſſin to puniſhment? It is only occupied at that inſtant, with the preſervation of an infinity of honeſt citizens. The idea of juſtice, and, conſequently, of almoſt all the virtues, is, therefore, compriſed in the extended ſignification of the word Humanity. It is the ſame with the words Juſt Judgment. This expreſſion, taken in its extended ſignification, includes, in like manner, all the different ſorts of judgments. Of this, at leaſt, we may be aſſured, that if all in us be ſenſation and compariſon of our ſenſations, there is no other ſort of judgment than that which compares, and compares juſtly.

The general concluſion of what I have ſaid of the equal aptitude, that men, commonly well organiſed, have to judgment, is that being once agreed,

That in men all is ſenſation;

That they do not think, or acquire ideas, but by the five ſenſes;

That the greater or leſs perfection in the five ſenſes, in changing the degrees of their ſenſations,

indifferent to the queſtion itſelf, they employ but little attention in its inveſtigation, and have but little regard to their judgment.

Now, ſuppoſing them compelled to attention, by a powerful and common motive, and that they underſtand each other, and have, moreover, the ſame object preſent to their eyes, or their memories: I ſay, that perceiving the ſame relations between the objects, they will form the ſame judgment: from whence I conclude, that all have the ſame capacity of judgment, that is, an equal aptitude to it.

does

does not change the relations objects have to each other.

It is evident, ſince the judgment conſiſts in the knowledge of theſe ſame relations, that the greater or leſs ſuperiority of the judgment is independent of the greater or leſs perfection in the organiſation. For which reaſon, women, whoſe ſenſe of feeling is more delicate than that of men, are not of ſuperior intelligence. It is, I think, difficult to deny this concluſion.

But, they will ſay, if we regard the univerſal ſuffrage rendered to geometric propoſitions, as a demonſtrative proof, that all men, commonly well organiſed, perceive the ſame relations between the ſame objects; why not in like manner regard the difference of opinion in matters of morality, politics, and metaphyſics, as a proof, that at leaſt in the latter ſciences, men do not perceive the ſame relations between the ſame objects.

CHAP. XVI.

The cauſe of the difference of opinions in morality, politics, and metaphyſics.

THE progreſſion of the human judgment is always the ſame. The application of the judgment, to this or that particular ſtudy, does not change that progreſſion. If men perceive in certain ſciences, the ſame relations, between the ſame objects, they compare with each other, they ought neceſſarily to perceive the ſame relations in all. Obſervation however does not agree with this reaſoning. But this contradiction is only apparent. Its true cauſe is eaſy to diſcover. In inquiring after it, we ſee for example, that if all men agree in the truth of geometric demonſtrations; it is, becauſe they are indifferent to the truth or falſity of thoſe demonſtrations;

Or becauſe they not only annex clear ideas, but alſo the ſame ideas to the words employed in that ſcience.

Or, laſtly, becauſe they have the ſame conception of a circle, a ſquare, a triangle, &c.

On the contrary, in morality, politics, and metaphyſics, if the opinions of men be very different,

It

fix the preciſe ſenſe of it. Till ſuch a work be digeſted, all diſputes on this ſubject will be undeterminable. It is the ſame with the word Intereſt.

INTEREST.

Among mankind few are honeſt; the word Intereſt, muſt in conſequence excite in moſt of them the idea of a pecuniary intereſt, or of ſome object equally mean and contemptible. Has a noble and elevated ſoul the ſame idea? No: this term recalls to his mind nothing but the ſentiment of ſelf-love. Virtue perceives nothing in intereſt, but the powerful and general ſpring, the ſource of action in all men, which carries them ſometimes to vice, and ſometimes to virtue. But did the jeſuits annex to this word, an idea equally extenſive, when they oppoſed my opinion? I know not: but this I know, that being then bankers, merchants, and bankrupts, they ought to have loſt ſight of every idea of a noble intereſt; that this word could not excite in them any other idea, but that of intrigue and pecuniary intereſt.

Now ſo vile an intereſt compelled them to perſue a perſecuted man. Perhaps they in ſecret adopt his opinions. As a proof of which they gave at Rouen, in 1750, an entertainment, whoſe deſign was to ſhow, "that pleaſure forms youth "to true virtue." The firſt act diſplayed the civil virtues; the ſecond, the warlike virtues; and

the third, the virtues proper to religion. In this entertainment they proved this truth by dances. Religion, there perſonified, danced with Pleaſure, for her partner; and to render Pleaſure more endearing, ſaid the Janſeniſt, the jeſuits have put her on breeches *. Now, if pleaſure, according to them, can operate all things on man, what cannot intereſt do with him! Is not all intereſt reducible in us to the ſearch of pleaſure †?

* We muſt do juſtice to the jeſuits: this accuſation is falſe. They are very libertines. The jeſuit, held in by his rules, and indifferent to pleaſures, is totally devoted to ambition. His deſire is to ſubdue the rich and powerful of the earth, either by force or fraud. Born to command, the great men of the earth are in his eyes but puppets, whom he moves at his pleaſure, by the ſtrings of direction and confeſſion. He conceals his interior contempt of them by an outward reſpect. The great are contented with this, and are, without perceiving it, reduced to mere machines. What the jeſuits cannot obtain by ſeduction, they accompliſh by force. Look into the annals of hiſtory, and there you will ſee theſe ſame jeſuits light up the torch of ſedition in China, in Japan, in Ethiopia, and in every country where they have preached the goſpel of peace. In England, we find, that they charged the mine which was to have blown up the parliament: that in Holland they aſſaſſinated the prince of Orange, and in France, Henry IV. that at Geneva they gave the ſignal for ſtorming the city: that their hands are frequently armed with daggers, and but rarely employed in ſelecting pleaſures, and, in a word, that their faults are not thoſe of weakneſs, but of villainy.

† Why did the jeſuits then riſe up with ſuch fury againſt me? Why do they go into all the great houſes, exclaiming againſt the Treatiſe on the Mind, and forbid any one to read it, repeating inceſſantly, like the father Canaye to marſhal Hocquincourt, *No Mind, Gentlemen, no Mind!* It is becauſe, being ſolely zealous of command, the jeſuits always deſire to blind the people? In fact, were men rightly informed of the principle

Pleaſures and pains are the moving powers of the univerſe. God has declared them to be ſo to the earth, by creating heaven for the virtuous, and hell for the wicked. The Catholic church itſelf has agreed to this opinion, when, in the diſpute between Meſſ. Boſſuet and Fenelon, it decided, that we do not love God (4) for himſelf, that is, independent of thoſe rewards and puniſhments, of which he is the diſpoſer. They have, therefore, been always convinced, that man, actuated by the ſentiment of ſelf-love, conſtantly obeys the law of his intereſt *.

ciple that holds them ſilent, did they knew that conſtantly directed in their conduct by an intereſt, either mean or noble, they always obey that intereſt: that it is to their laws, and not to their opinions, they owe their genius and their virtue: that with the forms of government of Rome and Sparta, Romans and Spartans might ſtill be produced; and, in ſhort, by a ſagacious diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments, of glory and infamy, the intereſt of particulars may be always united with that of the public, and the people compelled to be virtuous. What method could then be taken to hide from the people the inutility, and even the danger of a ſacerdotal power? Could they be long ignorant that the object, really important to the happineſs of a nation, is not the creation of prieſts, but ſagacious laws and judicious magiſtrates. The more clearly the jeſuits have ſeen this principle, the more they have feared for their authority, and the more ſolicitous they have been to obſcure the evidence of ſuch a principle.

* Does the commander deſire to advance himſelf? He wiſhes for a war. But what in a war are the objects of the ſubaltern officer? An augmentation of 30l. or 40l. per annum, to his pay, the deſire of laying empires waſte, and of the death of thoſe friends with whom he lives in intimacy, but who are ſuperior in rank.

What do the diverſity of opinions of this ſubject prove? Nothing: except that men do not underſtand each other. They underſtand each other very little better when they talk about virtue.

VIRTUE,

This word frequently excites in the mind very different ideas, according to our ſtate and ſituation, the ſociety with which we live, and the age or the country in which we were born. If a younger brother, according to the cuſtom of Normandy, ſhould avail himſelf, like Jacob, of the hunger or thirſt of the elder, to diveſt him of his right of primogeniture, he would be declared a cheat by all the tribunals. If a man, by the example of David, ſhould cauſe the huſband of his miſtreſs to be ſacrificed, he would be reckoned, not among the number of the virtuous, but of villains. It would be to little purpoſe, to ſay he made a good end; aſſaſſins ſometimes do the ſame, but are never propoſed as models of virtue.

Till preciſe ideas are fixed to this word, we may always ſay of virtue, as the Pirronians ſaid of the truth, "it is like the Eaſt, different, according to the ſituation from whence we regard it."

In the firſt ages of the church, the Chriſtians were in dread of other ſects; they were afraid of not being tolerated; what did they then preach?

Indulgence

Indulgence and love of our neighbour. The word Virtue, then recalled to their minds the idea of humanity and gentleneſs. The conduct of their maſter confirmed them in this idea. Jeſus was gentle with the Eſſenes, the Jews, and the Pagans; he bore no hatred to the Romans. He pardoned the Jews their injuries, and Pilate his injuſtice; he recommended charity to all. Is it ſo at this day? No: the hatred of our neighbours, and barbarity, under the name of zeal and policy, are in France, Spain, and Portugal, now compriſed in the idea of virtue.

The church in its infancy, whatever a man's religion might be, honoured his probity, and was little concerned about his belief. "He that is virtuous, is a Chriſtian, ſaid St. Juſtin, though he be otherwiſe an Atheiſt." *Et quicumque ſecundum rationem et verbum vixere Chriſtiani ſunt, quamvis athei.*

Jeſus, in his parables, preferred * the incredulous Samaritan to the devout Phariſee. St. Paul was ſcarce more difficult than Jeſus, and St. Juſtin. Cornelius is cited as a religious man, becauſe he was honeſt (5). Ch. x. ver. 2. of the

* Jeſus declares himſelf every where an enemy to the prieſts. He reproaches them every where with avarice and cruelty. Jeſus was puniſhed for his veracity. O Catholic prieſts, have you ſhowed yourſelves leſs barbarous than the prieſts of the Jews, and can the ſincere adorer of Jeſus have leſs hatred for you?

Acts

Acts of the Apoſtles, though he was not yet a Chriſtian. It is ſaid in like manner of one named Lydia. Ch. xvi. ver. 14. of the ſame Acts, that ſhe ſerved God; though ſhe had not then heard St. Paul, and was not converted.

In the days of Jeſus, ambition and vanity were not reckoned among the virtues. The kingdom of God was not of this world. Jeſus deſired neither riches, nor titles, nor authority in Judea. He commanded his diſciples to forſake their lands, and follow him. What ideas have they now of virtue? There is no Catholic Prelate that does not cabal for titles and honours. No religious order that has not intrigues at court, that does not carry on commerce, and grow rich by its bank. Jeſus and his apoſtles had no ſuch ideas of honeſty.

In the time of the latter, preſecution did not bear the name of charity. The apoſtles did not inſtigate Tiberius to impriſon the Gentiles or unbelievers. He who in that age would have compelled others to embrace his opinions, would have reigned by terror, erected a tribunal of inquiſition, burned his brethren, and ſeized on their property, would have been held infamous. The ſentences dictated by ſacerdotal pride, avarice, and cruelty, would have been read with horror. In theſe days, pride, avarice, and cruelty, in the countries of inquiſition, are placed in the rank of virtues.

Jeſus hated falſhood. He would not, therefore,

fore, like the church, have obliged Galileo, with a torch in his hand, to have retracted before the altar of the God of truth, thoſe he had diſcovered. The church is no longer an enemy to falſhood: pious frauds are canoniſed by it (6).

Jeſus, the ſon of God, was humble (7), and his haughty vicar pretends to command over ſovereigns, to legitimate vice at his pleaſure, and render aſſaſſins meritorious. He has beatified Clement. His virtue, therefore, is not that of Jeſus.

Friendſhip, honoured as a virtue among the Scythians, is not regarded as ſuch in a monaſtery. Their rules even render it criminal (8). The old man ſick and languiſhing in his cell, is deſerted by friendſhip and humanity. If monks were enjoined a mutual hatred, they could not more faithfully obſerve it than in a cloiſter.

Jeſus ordained that they ſhould render to Cæſar what was Cæſar's; he forbid to ſeize, by force or fraud, the property of another. But the word Virtue, which then implied juſtice, had no longer that ſignification, in the time of St. Bernard, when he ordained, at the head of the Croiſades, that nations ſhould forſake Europe to ravage Aſia, to dethrone the Sultans, and break in pieces crowns, over which thoſe nations had no ſort of right.

When, to enrich his order, that Saint promiſed a hundred acres in heaven, to thoſe who would give ten upon earth: when, by that ridiculous and fraudulent promiſe, he obtained the lawful

patrimony

patrimony of a great number of heirs; the idea of theft and injuſtice, muſt have been then included in the notion of virtue (9).

(9) What other idea could the Spaniards form of virtue, when the church permitted them to attack Montezuma, and the Incas, to deſpoil them of their riches, and ſeat themſelves on the thrones of Mexico and Peru? The monks, then maſters of Spain, could have forced them to reſtore the Mexicans and Peruvians (10) their gold, their liberty, their country, and their prince: they might at leaſt have loudly condemned the conduct of the Spaniards. What did the theologians? remain ſilent. Have they at other times ſhown more juſtice? No: father Hennepin, the recollect, reports inceſſantly, that the only way to convert the ſavages is to reduce them to ſlavery *. Could a method ſo unjuſt and barbarous have been imagined by the recollect Hennepin, if the theologians of the preſent day had the ſame idea of virtue as Jeſus? St. Paul ſays expreſly, that perſuaſion is the only method to be uſed in converting of the Gentiles. Who has recourſe to violence to prove the truths of geometry? Who does not know that virtue recommends itſelf? In what caſe, therefore, ought priſons, tortures, and butcheries to be uſed? When they preach crimes, errors, and abſurdities.

* See Deſcription of the Manners of the Savages of Louiſiana, page 105.

It

It was with ſword in hand, that Mahomet proved the truth of his dogmas. A religion, ſaid then the Chriſtia that permits man to force the belief of man, is religion. They co demned Mahomet in courſes, and juſti him by their conduct hat they called vic in him, they call virtue themſelves. Could they believe that the Muſ lman, ſo ſevere in his principles, was more ge tle in his manners than the Catholics. Muſt the Turk be tolérant toward the Chriſtian (11), the infidel, the Jew, and gentile, and the monk, whoſe religion makes a duty of humanity, burn in Spain his brethren, and in France throw into priſons the Janſeniſt and the Deiſt?

Could the Chriſtian commit ſo many abominations, if he had the ſame lea of virtue, as the ſon of God; and if the prieſt, obedient to the advice of his ambition only, were not deaf to that of the goſpel? If to the word Virtue there had been annexed a clear, preciſe, and invariable idea (12), men could not have always had ſuch different and extravagant ideas concerning it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

The word Virtue, exists [illegible] the Catholic clergy no other idea than that of [illegible] own advantage.

IF almoſt all religious bodies, ſaid the illuſtrious and unfortunate attorney-general of the parliament of Brittany, are by their inſtitution animated with an intereſt, contrary to that of the public welfare, how can they form ſound ideas of virtue? Among the prelates, there are few Fenelons (13), few that have his virtues, his humanity, and his diſintereſted ſpirit. Among the monks, they may count, perhaps, a great many ſaints, but few honeſt men. Every religious body is greedy of riches and power: no bounds are ſet to their ambition *. A hundred ridiculous bulls,

* The humble clergy declare themſelves to be the firſt body in the ſtate: however, (as is obſerved by a man of much diſcernment) there are but three bodies abſolutely eſſential to the adminiſtration: the firſt, is the body of magiſtrates, who are to defend my property againſt the uſurpation of my neighbour. The ſecond, is the body of the army, charged in like manner to defend my property againſt the invaſion of foreigners. The third, is the body of the citizens, who appointed to receive the revenues, furniſh a maintenance for the two others. Now, to what purpoſe ſerves the order of the clery, more expenſive to the ſtate, than the three others together? To maintain the morals of the people. But there are morals in Penſylvania, and no clergy.

iſſued

iſſued by the popes, in favour of the jeſuits, prove this fact. But if the jeſuits are ambitious, is the church leſs ſo? Let any one open its hiſtory: that is, the hiſtory of the errors and diſputes of the fathers, the enterprizes of the clergy, and the crimes of the popes: he will every where find the ſpiritual power, an enemy to the temporal *, forget that its kingdom is not of this world, and endeavours continually, by freſh efforts, to poſſeſs itſelf of the riches and power of the earth, and not only to take from Cæſar that which is Cæſar's, but would attack him with impunity. If it were

* The church by declaring itſelf the ſole judge of what is, and what is not ſin, has thought under that title to be able to aſſume the ſupreme juriſdiction. In fact, if no one has a right to puniſh a good action, and recompenſe one that is bad; the judge of their goodneſs or badneſs is the ſole lawful judge of a nation: princes and magiſtrates are nothing more than the executioners of the ſentences of others; their function is reduced to that of the hangman's. The project was great; it was covered with the veil of religion: it did not at firſt alarm the magiſtracy. The church was, in appearance, ſubject to their authority, and waited to deprive them of it, when it ſhould be acknowledged the ſole judge of the merit of human actions, that acknowledgment would univerſally legitimate its pretenſions. What power could ſovereigns have oppoſed to that of the church? No other than the force of arms. The people, then ſlaves to two powers, whoſe will and laws would have been frequently contradictory, muſt have waited till force had decided between them, which ſhould be obeyed.

This project, I confeſs, has not been fully executed. But it is conſtantly true, notwithſtanding the inſignificant diſtinction of temporal and ſpiritual, that in every Catholic State there are really two kingdoms, and two abſolute maſters over every inhabitant.

poſſible,

poſſible, that the ſuperſtitious Catholics, could preſerve any idea of juſt and unjuſt, they would be ſhocked, on reading ſuch a hiſtory, and hold the ſacerdotal power in horror.

Does a prince promiſe, in ſuch a year, to ſuppreſs ſuch a tax? Does the year paſs over, and he boldly break his word? Why does not the church reproach him publicly, with the violation of his promiſe? Becauſe, indifferent to the public welfare, to juſtice, and humanity, it is ſolely employed in promoting its own intereſt. If the prince be a tyrant, it abſolves him. But if he be what they call a heretic, it anathematiſes, depoſes, aſſaſſinates him. What, however, is this crime of hereſy: the word, when pronounced by judicious and diſpaſſionate men, ſignifies nothing more than a *particular opinion*. It is not from ſuch a church that we muſt expect clear ideas of equity. The clergy will never give the title of virtuous, but to ſuch actions as tend to the increaſe of its power and revenues. To what cauſe, but that of the intereſt of the prieſthood, can we attribute the contradictory deciſions of the Sorbonne*? Without this intereſt would they have maintained at one time, and tolerated at all times, the regicide doctrine of the jeſuits? Would they have concealed its odious nature?

* It would be a ſtriking collection, that of the contradictory condemnations made by the Sorbonne, before and ſince Deſcartes, againſt almoſt every work of genius.——

Would

Would they have waited for the magiſtrate to point it out?

But in receiving that doctrine, they have ſhown more folly than villany. That they are dolts, I agree: but can we ſuppoſe them to be honeſt, when we conſider the fury with which they attack philoſophical writings, and the ſilence they obſerve on thoſe of the jeſuits? By approving in their aſſembly, the morality of thoſe religious *, either the doctors of the Sorbonne judge them to be found (14), without examining them, (and, in that caſe, what opinion can we have of ſuch ſtupid judges?) or, they judge them found, after having examined them, and acknowledge them for ſuch, (and, in that caſe, what opinion can we have of ſuch ignorant judges?) or, laſtly, theſe doctors, after having examined them, and found them bad, approve them through fear (15), intereſt, or ambition, (and, in this laſt caſe, what opinion can we have of ſuch knaviſh judges?)

In a journal, entitled "Chriſtianity, or, Religion avenged," if the theologian Chuchat, a hired declaimer againſt the moſt eſteemed philoſophers and writers of Europe, is always ſilent about what regards the jeſuits, it is, becauſe he expects protection and preferment from them.

* There are among theſe doctors men of learning and probity: but they rarely make part of their aſſemblies; which are, as M. Voltaire obſerves, commonly compoſed of the dregs of the college.

That intereſt conſtantly dictates the judgments of the theologians, is well known. The Sorbonniſts have therefore no longer any pretenſions to the title of moraliſts; they are even ignorant of its principles. The inſcription on ſome dials, *Quod ignoro, doceo*, *I teach what I don't know*, ſhould be the motto of the Sorbonne. Would they otherwiſe take for their guides to heaven, and to virtue, the fautors of jeſuitical morality? Let theſe doctors ſtill exalt the excellence of the theological virtues. Thoſe virtues are local; true virtue is reputed ſuch in all ages, and all countries (16). The name of virtue ſhould be given to ſuch actions only, as are uſeful to the public, and conformable to the general intereſt. Has theology conſtantly kept the people from the knowledge of this ſort of virtue? and has it always obſcured in them the ideas of it? It is the effect of the intereſt of theology; and it is in conformity to this intereſt, that the prieſt has every where ſolicited the excluſive privilege of public inſtruction. The French comedians built a theatre at Seville; the chapter and vicar made them demoliſh it: Here, ſaid one of the canons, our company will ſuffer no actors, but their own.

O man! cried an ancient ſage, who can ever ſay how far thy folly and ſtupidity will carry thee? The theologian knows, laughs at it, and profits by it.——

It

It was ever the increaſe of their wealth and power that the theologians purſued under the name of religion *. We cannot be aſtoniſhed therefore that their maxims change with their ſituation, that they have not now the ſame ideas of virtue they formerly had, and that the morality of Jeſus is not that of his miniſters. It is not the Catholics only, but every ſect and every people, that, for want of determinate ideas of probity, have had very different notions concerning it, according to the diverſity of ages and countries (17).

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the different ideas that different nations form of virtue.

IN the Eaſt, and eſpecially in Perſia, celibacy is a crime. Nothing, ſay the Perſians, is more oppoſite to the deſign of nature, and of the Creator, than celibacy †. Love is a corporeal want, a neceſſary ſecretion. Should any one by a vow of continence oppoſe the vow of nature?

* Why does every monk, who defends with a ridiculous zeal the falſe miracles of his founder, laugh at the atteſted exiſtence of fairies? Becauſe he has no intereſt to believe them. Take away intereſt, and there remains nothing but reaſon, and reaſon is not credulous.

† In Perſia a lad no ſooner attains the age of puberty than they give him a concubine.

God, who gave us organs, does nothing in vain: its his pleaſure that we ſhould uſe them.

Solon, the ſagacious legiſlator of Athens, made little account of this monkiſh chaſtity (18). If in his laws, ſays Plutarch, he expreſly forbids ſlaves to perfume themſelves, and the love of young people, it is, adds the hiſtorian, that even in the Greek amours Solon did not ſee any thing diſhoneſt. But thoſe haughty republicans, who purſued without ſhame all ſorts of amours, would not debaſe themſelves by the vile profeſſion of a ſpy or informer: they did not betray the intereſt of their country, nor violate the property or liberty of their fellow-citizens. A Greek or a Roman would not, without confuſion, have received the fetters of ſlavery. The true Roman could not bear, without horror, even the ſight of an Aſiatic tyrant.

In the time of Cato the Cenſor, Eumenes came to Rome. At his arrival all the young people crowded round him: Cato alone ſhunned him (19). Why Cato, they ſaid, do you fly a ſovereign ſo courted, ſo good a king, ſuch a friend to the Romans? Let him be as good as you pleaſe, replied Cato, *Every deſpotic prince is a devourer of human fleſh* (20), *that all virtuous men ſhould avoid.*

It is in vain to attempt the enumeration of all the different ideas that different nations (21) and private perſons (22) have had of virtue. We can only ſay, that a catholic who has more vene-

ration

ration for the founder of an order of drones, than for a Minos, a Mercury, a Lycurgus, &c. has certainly no juſt idea of virtue. Now till preciſe ideas be annexed to this word, every man muſt, according to the education chance has given him, form thoſe that are different.

A young girl is brought up by a ſtupid and bigoted mother. This girl can underſtand by the word Virtue nothing but the exactitude with which the nuns faſt, and recite their prayers. The word therefore excites no ideas in her but thoſe of diſcipline, hair-cloth, and pater-noſters.

Another daughter is brought up, on the contrary, by judicious and patriotic parents, who never give her any examples as virtuous but ſuch as are uſeful to our country; nor ever extol any character but ſuch as Arria, Porcia, &c. this girl will neceſſarily have ideas of virtue very different from the former. The one will admire in Arria the force of virtue, and the example of conjugal love; the other will regard the ſame Arria as a Pagan, a woman of the world, a ſuicide, and devoted to damnation, one who ought to be ſhunned and deteſted.

Make the ſame experiment on two young men as on the two daughters: let one of them be an aſſiduous reader of the lives of ſaints, and a witneſs, ſo to ſay, of the torments the demon of the fleſh makes them ſuffer; ſee them continually flogging themſelves, rolling among thorns, feed-

ing on women of ſnow, &c. He will have very different ideas of virtue from him who, devoting himſelf to more noble and inſtructive ſtudies, takes for his models ſuch men as Socrates, Scipio, Ariſtides, Timoleon; and that I may come home to the age in which I live, Miron, Harley, Pibrac, and Barillon (23); "thoſe reſpectable magiſtrates, thoſe illuſtrious victims of a love for "their country, who by their wiſe and juſt maxims, diſſipated, ſays cardinal de Retz, more factions than all the gold of Spain and England "could kindle." It is therefore impoſſible that the word Virtue ſhould not excite in us different ideas (24), according as we read Plutarch, or the Golden Legend. Thus, ſays Mr. Hume, they have, in every age and every country, erected altars to men of characters totally different.

Among the Pagans it was to Hercules, Caſtor, Ceres, Bacchus, and Romulus, that they rendered divine honours; but among the Muſſulmans, as among the Catholics, it is to an obſcure dervis, or a vile monk, in a word to a Dominic or an Antony, they decree the ſame honors.

It was after having deſtroyed monſters and puniſhed tyrants; it was by their courage, their talents, their beneficence, and humanity, that the ancient heroes opened the gates of Olympus. But at this day it is by faſting, caſtigation, and poltroonery, by a blind ſubmiſſion and a vile obedience, that the monk opens the gate of Heaven.

This

This revolution in human minds, no doubt, ſtruck Machiavel, ſo that he ſays in his fourth Diſcourſe, "Every religion that makes a duty of "ſufferings and humility, that inſpires a people with "a mere paſſive courage; enervates their minds, "debaſes their ſpirit, and prepares them for ſla-"very." The effect would doubtleſs have nearly followed the prediction, if, as Mr. Hume obſerves, the cuſtoms and laws of ſociety had not modified the character and genius of religions.

We have ſeen in theſe two chapters, what indeterminate ideas are annexed to the words *good*, *intereſt*, and *virtue*. I have ſhown that theſe words, conſtantly employed in an arbitrary manner, excite, and ought to excite, different ideas according to the ſociety with which we live, and the application we propoſe to make of them. Whoever would diſcuſs a queſtion of this kind, ſhould therefore firſt ſettle the ſignification of the words. Without this preliminary, every diſpute of this nature will be indeterminable. Thus men on almoſt all queſtions in morality, politics, and metaphyſics, underſtand each other the leſs, the more they reaſon about them.

The words once defined, a queſtion is reſolved almoſt as ſoon as propoſed; which proves, that all minds are juſt, and all perceive the ſame relations between the ſame objects; a proof that in morality, politics, and metaphyſics (25),

the diverſity of opinions is the mere effect of the uncertain ſignification of words, of the abuſe that is made of them, and perhaps of the imperfection of languages. But what remedy is there for this evil?

CHAP. XIX.

There is but one method of fixing the uncertain ſignification of words; and but one nation that can make uſe of it.

TO determine the uncertain ſignification of words, a dictionary ſhould be compoſed, in which determinate ideas muſt be annexed to different expreſſions (26). This difficult work can be performed only among a free people. England is perhaps the only country in Europe from which the univerſe can expect and obtain this benefaction. But is ignorance there without a protector? There is no nation where ſome individuals have not an intereſt in mixing the darkneſs of falſhood with the light of the truth. The deſire of the blind is that blindneſs ſhould be univerſal; the deſire of knaves, that ſtupidity ſhould be extended, and dupes be multiplied. In England, as in Portugal, there are men great and unjuſt; but what can they do at London againſt a writer? There is no Engliſhman who, behind the rampart of his laws, cannot brave the power of the great, and laugh at their ignorance, ſuperſtition, and

ſtu-

ſtupidity *. The Engliſhman is born free; let him therefore profit by that liberty to enlighten the world; let him contemplate in the homage that is at this day rendered to the men of genius among the Greeks, what poſterity will render to him; and let the proſpect animate his endeavours.

This age, they ſay, is the age of philoſophy: all the nations of Europe have produced men of genius in this ſcience; all now ſeem occupied in the ſearch after truth. But in what country can it be publiſhed with impunity? There is but one; which is England.

Engliſhman †, make uſe of thy liberty; of that gift which diſtinguiſhes the man from the vile ſlave and domeſtic animal, to diſpenſe light to the nations of the earth! Such a benefaction will inſure you their eternal acknowledgment. What applauſe can be refuſed to people virtuous enough to permit their writers to fix in a dictionary the preciſe ſignification of each word, and by that mean to diſſipate the myſterious obſcurity that ſtill envelopes morality, politics, metaphy-

* *The liberty of the Engliſh appears to foreigners, as moſt things do at a diſtance, greater than it really is. But a few years ſince a man named Annet was confined ſeveral months in a common goal with felons, and ſuffered the infamous puniſhment of the pillory, for publiſhing ſome thing that was diſagreeable to my lords the biſhops.*

† Every government, ſay the Engliſh, that forbids to think and to write on the objects of adminiſtration, is without diſpute, a government of which no good can be ſaid.

fics,

ſics, theology, &c. (27). It is reſerved for the authors of ſuch a dictionary to terminate ſo many diſputes, eterniſed by the abuſe of words (28); they alone can reduce the ſcience of men to what they really know.

This dictionary, tranſlated into all languages, would be the general collection of almoſt all the ideas of mankind. Let preciſe ideas be annexed to each expreſſion, and the ſchool divine, who by the magic of words, has often thrown the world into confuſion, will be a magician without power. The taliſman, in the poſſeſſion of which his ability conſiſted, will be broken. Then all thoſe fools, who under the name of metaphyſicians, have for ſo long a time wandered in the land of chimeras, and who, on bladders blown up by wind, traverſe, in every direction, all the depths of infinity, will no longer ſay they ſee what they ſee not, and know what they know not; they will no longer impoſe on mankind. Then the propoſitions in morality, politics, and metaphyſics, becoming as ſuſceptible of demonſtration as the propoſitions of geometry, men will all have the ſame ideas of thoſe ſciences, becauſe all of them, (as I have ſhewn), will neceſſarily perceive the ſame relations between the ſame objects.

A new proof of this truth is, that in combining nearly the ſame facts, either in the material world as is demonſtrated by geometry, or in the intellectual world, as is proved by metaphyſics, all men have,

have, in all times, come to nearly the ſame concluſion.

CHAP. XX.

The excurſions of men, and their diſcoveries in the intellectual kingdoms, have been always nearly the ſame.

AMONG the imaginary countries that the human mind runs over, that of the fairies, the genii, and enchanters, is the firſt where I ſhall ſtop. Mankind love fables: every one reads them, hears them, and makes them. A confuſed deſire of happineſs attends us with pleaſure through the land of prodigies and chimeras.

With regard to chimeras, they are always of the ſame kind. All men deſire riches without number, power without bounds, and pleaſure without end; and this deſire always goes before the poſſeſſion.

How happy ſhould we be, ſay the greateſt part of mankind, if our wiſhes were fulfilled as ſoon as formed? O thoughtleſs man! can you be always ignorant, that a part of your felicity conſiſts in the deſire itſelf? It is with happineſs, as with the golden bird ſent by the fairies to a young princeſs: the bird ſettles at thirty paces from her; ſhe goes to catch it, advances ſoftly, is ready to ſeize it; the bird flies thirty paces further; ſhe paſſes ſeveral months

months in the purſuit, and is happy. If the bird had ſuffered itſelf to be taken at firſt, the princeſs would have put it in a cage, and in one week would have been tired of it. This is the bird of happineſs, that the miſer and the coquette inceſſantly purſue. They catch it not, and are happy in their purſuit, becauſe they are ſecure from diſguſt. If our deſires were to be every inſtant gratified, the mind would languiſh in inaction, and ſink under diſquietude. Man muſt have deſires; a deſire new and eaſy to be gratified muſt conſtantly ſucceed to a deſire fulfilled (29). Few men acknowledge they have this want; it is however to a ſucceſſion of their deſires they owe their felicity.

Continually impatient to gratify their wiſhes, men built inceſſantly caſtles in Spain; they would intereſt all nature in their happineſs; but not being able to effect it, they addreſſed themſelves to imaginary beings, to fairies and genii. If they ſuppoſe the exiſtence of thoſe beings, it is from a confuſed hope that by the favour of an enchanter they may become, as in the Thouſand and One Nights, poſſeſſed of the marvellous lamp, and nothing will then be wanting to their felicity.

It is therefore a deſire of happineſs that produces a greedy curioſity, and the love of the marvellous, that amongſt divers people has created ſupernatural beings, which under the names of fairies, genii, ſylphs, enchanters, &c. have always been the ſame beings, and by whom prodigies nearly

nearly the ſame have been every where performed; which proves that in this kind the diſcoveries have been nearly ſimilar.

PHILOSOPHICAL TALES.

The tales of this ſort, more grave and important, though ſometimes equally frivolous and leſs entertaining than the foregoing, have preſerved among themſelves the ſame reſemblance. In the number of theſe tales, that are at once ſo ingenious and diſguſting, I place the beauty of morality *, the natural goodneſs of men, and the ſeveral ſyſtems of the material world; of which experience alone ought to be the architect: if the philoſopher conſults it not, or has not the courage to ſtop where obſervation fails, when he thinks to make a ſyſtem he makes nothing but a romance.

This philoſopher, for the want of experiments, is forced to ſubſtitute hypotheſes, and to fill up with conjectures the immenſe interval, that the preſent, and what is ſtill more, paſt ignorance, have left in all parts of his ſyſtem. With regard to hypotheſes, they are almoſt all of the ſame kind. Whoever reads ancient philoſophers, will ſee that they almoſt all adopt nearly the ſame

* The beauty of morality is only to be found in the paradiſe of fools, where Milton makes agni, ſcapularies, chaplets, and indulgences, inceſſantly whirl about.

plan,

plan, and that where they differ, it is in the choice of the materials employed in the conſtruction of the univerſe.

Thales ſaw but one element in all nature, which was the aqueous fluid. Proteus, the marine god, who metamorphoſed himſelf into fire, a tree, water, and an animal, was the emblem of his ſyſtem. Heraclitus diſcovered the ſame Proteus in the element of light: the earth appeared to him to be a globe of fire reduced to a ſtate of fixity. Anaximines made of the air an indefinite agent; it was the common parent of all the elements. The air condenſed, formed water; ſtill more denſe, formed earth. It was to the different degrees of the air's denſity that all beings owed their exiſtence. They who after the firſt philoſophers aſſumed like them the office of architects of the palace of the univerſe, and laboured at its conſtruction, fell into the ſame errors: Deſcartes is a proof.

It is by proceeding from fact to fact that we attain to great diſcoveries. We muſt advance in the train of experience, and never go before it. The impatience natural to the human mind, and eſpecially to men of genius, cannot accommodate itſelf to a progreſs ſo ſlow (30), but always ſo ſure; they would gueſs at what experience alone can reveal. They forget that it is on the knowledge of a firſt fact, from which all thoſe of nature may be deduced, that the diſcovery of the ſyſtem of the world depends; and that it is only by

chance,

chance, analyſis, and obſervation that the firſt fact can lead to the general principle *.

Before men undertake to conſtruct the palace of the univerſe, what materials ſhould they draw from the mines of experience? It is at length time that all ſhould labour in the ſtructure of this fabric; and happy will they be to conſtruct ſome detached parts of the projected edifice: the moſt aſſiduous diſciples of experiments are ſenſible that without it they wander in the land of chimeras, where men in all ages have ſeen nearly the ſame phantoms, and have always embraced thoſe errors, whoſe reſemblance proves at once the uniform manner in which men of all countries combine the ſame objects, and the equal aptitude they have to diſcernment.

RELIGIOUS TALES.

Theſe ſort of tales, leſs amuſing than the firſt, leſs ingenious than the ſecond, and yet more reſpected, have armed nations againſt each other, have made rivers of human blood to flow, and have filled the world with deſolation. Under the title of Religious Tales, I comprehend in general all the falſe religions; theſe have always preſerved among themſelves the ſtrongeſt reſemblance.

* *Our author talks here as if he were ignorant of the Newtonian ſyſtem of the univerſe, founded on clear undeniable experiments. But can that be poſſible?*

Among

Among the many various cauſes to which we may aſcribe the invention of theſe tales (31), I cite the deſire of immortality for the firſt. The proof, if we believe Warburton and ſome other learned men, that God was the author of the Jewiſh law, is, ſay they, that in the law of Moſes there is no mention of rewards or puniſhments, or the life to come, nor conſequently of the immortality of the ſoul. Now, they add, if the religion of the Jews had been of human inſtitution, men would have made the ſoul immortal; a lively and powerful intereſt would have induced them to believe it ſuch (32): this intereſt is their horror for death and annihilation. This horror would have been ſufficient, without the aid of revelation, to have made them invent that dogma. Man would be immortal in his preſent ſtate, and would believe himſelf ſo, if all the bodies that ſurround him did not every inſtant prove the contrary. Forced to yield to this truth, he has ſtill the ſame deſire of immortality. Eſon's cauldron of rejuvineſcence proves the antiquity of this deſire. To make it perpetual, it was neceſſary to found it on ſome probability at leaſt; to effect this, they made the ſoul of a matter extremely ſubtle; they ſuppoſed it an indeſtructible atom, that ſurvived the diſſolution of all the other parts, in a word, a principle of life *.

* *The opinions of men, uninfluenced by revelation, concerning a future ſtate, will ever be different, according to their different circumſtances.*

This being, under the name of soul *, was to preserve after death all the affections of which it was susceptible during its union with the body. This system supposed men doubted the less of the immortality of the soul, as neither experience nor observation could contradict such belief, for neither of them can form any judgment of an imperceptible atom. Its existence indeed was not demonstrated; but what proof do we want of what we wish to believe, and what demonstration is strong enough to prove the falsity of a favourite opinion? It is true we never meet with any souls in our walks, and it is to shew the reason of this, that men, after having created souls, thought themselves obliged to create a country for their habitation. Each nation, and even each individual, according to his inclinations, and the particular nature of his wants, has formed a particular

cumstances. The good man will readily believe it, for it is his interest there should be a future state. The bad man will strive hard to disbelieve it, for he will think it his interest there should not be a future state; but after many unsuccessful struggles his mind must remain in doubt and confusion; for it is impossible he should ever be certain there is no future existence.

As a frequent reflection on a futurity, attended with a firm belief of it, makes one of the most valuable enjoyments of the present life, ought not a man to rank those who would deprive him of that enjoyment, among the most pernicious of his enemies?

* The savages do not refuse a soul to any thing; their guns, their caldrons, or the materials of their buildings. See P. Hennepin, Voyage de la Louisiane, p. 94.

plan *. Sometimes the ſavage nations placed this habitation in a vaſt foreſt, full of wild fowl, and watered with rivers ſtocked with fiſh: ſometimes they placed it in an open level country, abounding in paſture; in the middle of which roſe a bed of ſtrawberries as large as a mountain, different parts of which they portioned off, for the nouriſhment of themſelves and their families.

People leſs expoſed to hunger, and beſide more numerous and better inſtructed, placed on this ſpot all that is delightful in nature, and gave it the name of Elyſium. Covetous mortals formed it after the plan of the garden of Heſperides, and ſtocked it with trees, whoſe golden branches were loaded with fruits of diamonds. The more voluptuous nations placed in it trees of ſugar and rivers of milk, and furniſhed it with delicious animals. Each people in this manner furniſhed the country of ſouls with what was on earth the object of their deſires. Imagination, directed by different wants and inclinations, operated every where in the ſame manner, and conſequently made but little variation in the invention of falſe religions.

If we believe the preſident de Broſſe, in his excellent hiſtory of Fetichiſm, or the worſhip ren-

* *The curſory reader will do well to remember, that all here ſaid about a future ſtate, relates merely to the different conjectures of different nations, and has nothing to do with what we are taught by revelation; but is brought to ſhew, that in works of imagination the human mind operates nearly in the ſame manner in all ages and all nations.*

dered

dered to terreſtrial objects, it was not only the firſt of religions, but its worſhip preſerved to the preſent day in almoſt all Africa, and eſpecially in Nigritia, was formerly the univerſal religion *. It is known, he adds, that in the Pierres Bœtites, it was Venus Urania they worſhipped. That in the foreſt of Dodona the Greeks adored the oaks. It is alſo known that dogs, cats, crocodiles, ſerpents, elephants, lions, eagles, flies, monkies, &c. have had altars erected to them as gods, not only in Egypt but in Syria, Phœnicia, and almoſt all Aſia. We know alſo that lakes, trees, the ſea, and the unformed rocks have in like manner been the objects of adoration of nations of Europe and America. Now ſuch an uniformity in the firſt religions, proves one ſtill greater in the minds of men, as we ſtill find the ſame uniformity in religions more modern or leſs groſs. Such was the Celtic religion: the Mitras of the Perſes we find in the god Thor; Ariman in the Wolf; Feuris, the Apollo of the Greeks, in Baldar; Venus, in Freia; and the Deſtinies in the three ſiſters Urda, Verandi and Skulda: theſe three ſiſters are ſeated by the ſource of a fountain, whoſe waters lave the roots of a famous aſh named Yaraſel; its branches

* If by catholic is to be underſtood univerſal, papiſm does wrong to pretend to the title. The religion of Fetichiſm, and that of the Pagans are thoſe only that have been truly catholic.

ſhadow the earth, and its ſummit, that reached above the clouds, formed its canopy.

The falſe religions have therefore been almoſt every where the ſame. From whence ariſes this uniformity? From men's being animated by nearly the ſame intereſt, having nearly the ſame objects to compare together, and the ſame inſtrument, that is, the ſame judgment to combine them; they have therefore neceſſarily formed the ſame concluſions: it is, becauſe, in general, all are proud; that, without any particular revelation, and conſequently without proof, all regard man as the only favourite of heaven, and the principal object of its cares. May we not, after a certain monk, ſometimes repeat, "What is a capuchin compared to "a planet?"

Muſt we, to found the haughty pretenſions of man on facts, ſuppoſe, as in certain religions, that the Divinity, forſaking heaven for earth, formerly came down to converſe with mortals in the form of a fiſh, a ſerpent, or a man? Muſt we, to prove the intereſt heaven takes in the inhabitants of the earth, publiſh books, in which, according to ſome impoſtures, are included all the precepts and duties that God requires of man?

Such a book, if we believe the Muſſulmans, compoſed in heaven, was brought down to the earth by the angel Gabriel, and given by that angel to Mahomet. It is called the Koran. When we open this book, we find it capable of a thouſand inter-

interpretations: it is obſcure and unintelligible; yet ſuch is human blindneſs, that they ſtill regard as divine, a work in which God is painted under the form of a tyrant; where this ſame God is inceſſantly employed in puniſhing his ſlaves for not comprehending what is incomprehenſible; in ſhort, where thi God, the author of phraſes that are unintelligible without the commentary of an Iman, is properly nothing more than a ſtupid legiſlator, whoſe laws have conſtantly need of interpretation. How long will the Muſſulmans preſerve ſo much veneration for a work ſo filled with abſurdities and blaſphemies?

To conclude; if the metaphyſics of falſe religions, if the excurſions of human minds in the countries of fouls, and the diſcoveries in the intellectual regions, have been every where the ſame, let us further ſee if the impoſtures (33) of the ſacerdotal bodies for ſupporting theſe falſe religions, have not in all countries preſerved amongſt themſelves the ſame reſemblances.

CHAP. XXI.

The impoſtures of the miniſters of falſe religions.

IN every country, the ſame motives of intereſt, and the ſame facts have combined to furniſh ſacerdotal bodies with the ſame means to impoſe on the people; and in every country the prieſts have made uſe of them *. A private perſon may be moderate in his deſires, and content with what he poſſeſſes; a body is always ambitious: it conſtantly endeavours, with greater or leſs rapidity, to increaſe its power and wealth. The deſire of the clergy has been in all times to be powerful and opulent †. By what method can it ſatisfy this deſire? By the vending of hope and fear. The prieſts, wholeſale dealers in theſe commodities, were ſenſible that the ſale would be certain and lucrative; and that if hope ſupported the hawker who ſold in the ſtreets the chance of a great prize, and the quack who ſold on a ſcaffold the chance of a cure,

* In the Indies the prieſts annex certain virtues, and indulgences to extinguiſhed fire brands, and ſell them very dear. At Rome father Peepe, a jeſuit, ſold in like manner little prayers to the Virgin: he made hens ſwallow them, affirming, that they would make them lay their eggs bette.

† *What makes all doctrines plain and clear?*
About two hundred pounds a year:
And that which was prov'd true before,
Proved falſe again?—Two hundred more.
HUDIBRAS.

it

it would in like manner maintain the bonze, and talopoüin, who ſold in their temples the fear of hell and the hope of heaven: and if the quack made a fortune by vending one of theſe commodities only, that is hope, the prieſt muſt make a greater by ſelling both hope and fear. Man, ſaid they, is timid; there will conſequently be moſt got by the ſale of the laſt article. But to whom ſhall we ſell it? To the ſinners. And to whom ſell hope? To the penitents. Convinced of this truth, the prieſthood conſidered that a great number of buyers ſuppoſed a great number of ſinners; and that as the preſents of the ſick enriched the phyſician, offerings and expiations of ſinners would inrich the prieſt; and therefore as ſick people were neceſſary to one, ſinners were to the other. The ſinner would be conſtantly a ſlave to the prieſt; and by the multiplication of ſins, which would promote the ſale of indulgences, maſſes, &c. the power and riches of the clergy would increaſe. But if among the ſins the prieſts counted thoſe actions only that were really prejudical to ſociety, the ſacerdotal power would be of little conſequence; it would only extend to cheats and villains: now the clergy would have it extend to honeſt men alſo. To effect which, it was neceſſary to create ſuch crimes as honeſt men might commit. The prieſt therefore ordained that the leaſt liberties between the two ſexes, that the mere deſire of pleaſure, ſhould be a ſin. They moreover

inſtituted a great number of ſuperſtitious ceremonies, and ordered every individual to obey them; declaring the inobſervation of thoſe ceremonies to be the greateſt of all crimes, and that the violation of the ritual law ſhould be, as among the Jews, if poſſible, more ſeverely puniſhed than the moſt abominable villainy.

Theſe rites and ceremonies, more or leſs numerous among different nations, were every where nearly the ſame: they were every where held ſacred, and ſecured to the prieſthood the greateſt authority over the ſeveral orders of the ſtate (34).

There were however among the prieſts of different nations ſome, who, more dextrous than others, exacted from the people not only the obſervance of certain ceremonies, but the belief of certain dogmas alſo. The number of theſe dogmas increaſed inſenſibly, and with them increaſed infidels and heretics *. What did the clergy then? They ordained that hereſy ſhould be puniſhed with a confiſcation of property; and this law augmented the riches of the church: they decreed moreover, that infidelity ſhould be puniſhed with death; and this law augmented their power. From the moment the prieſts condemned Socrates, genius, virtue, and even kings themſelves trembled before the ſacerdotal power; its throne was ſupported by conſternation and panic terror; that ſpreading over the minds of the people the darkneſs of igno-

* We ſay in Europe, God is in heaven; to ſay ſo in Bulgaria is hereſy and impiety.

rance, became the unſhaken props of pontifical power. When man is forced to extinguiſh the light of reaſon within him, and has no knowledge of juſt or unjuſt, it is then he conſults the prieſt, and implicitly follows his counſels.

But why does not man rather have recourſe to the natural law? The falſe religions themſelves are founded on that common baſis. That I allow: but natural religion is nothing more than reaſon itſelf (35). Now how can a man believe in his reaſon when he is forbid the uſe of it? Beſide, who can perceive the natural law through that myſterious cloud with which the ſacerdotal power ſurrounds it? This law, they ſay, is the canvaſs of all religions. Be it ſo; but the prieſts have embroidered ſo many myſteries on this canvaſs, that the embroidery entirely covers the ground. Whoever reads hiſtory will find that the virtue of the people diminiſhes in proportion as their ſuperſtition increaſes *. By what means can a ſuperſtitious man be inſtructed in his duty? How in the night of error and ignorance can he perceive the path of juſtice? In a country where all learning is confined to the prieſthood, clear and juſt ideas of virtue can never be formed.

* Superſtition is ſtill the religion of the wiſeſt people. The Engliſh neither confeſs nor pray to ſaints; their devotion conſiſts in not working or ſinging on a Sunday. A man who ſhould play on a fiddle on that day would be reckoned impious: but he is a good Chriſtian if he paſs the day in a public houſe with wenches.

The

The intereſt of the prieſts is not that a man act virtuouſly, but that he do not think. *It is neceſſary*, ſay they, *that the ſon of man know little, and believe a great deal**.

I have thus ſhewn the uniform means by which the prieſts acquire their power; let us now ſee if the means by which they preſerve it are not alſo uniform.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the uniformity in the means by which the miniſters of falſe religions preſerve their authority.

IN every religion the firſt object the prieſts propoſe is to ſtifle the curioſity of mankind, and to prevent the examination of every dogma whoſe abſurdity is too palpable to be concealed.

To attain this end the human paſſions muſt be flattered: to perpetuate the blindneſs of men, they muſt be made to believe it is their intereſt, and conſequently deſire it. Nothing is more eaſy to a bonze. The practice of virtue is more troubleſome than the obſervance of ceremonies. It is leſs difficult to kneel before an altar, to offer a ſacrifice, to bathe in the Ganges (36), and eat fiſh on Fridays, than to pardon, like Camillus, the ingratitude of our fellow-citizens; to ſpurn

* The prieſts will not allow that God renders to every one according to his works, but according to his faith.

at

at riches like Papirius; or to inſtruct mankind like Socrates: let us therefore flatter, ſays the bonze, the human vices, that thoſe vices may be our protectors; let us ſubſtitute in the place of virtue, offerings and expiations, that we may, by certain ſuperſtitious ceremonies, cleanſe the foul ſoul from the blackeſt crimes. Such a doctrine could not fail to increaſe the riches and authority of the bonzes. They ſaw all the importance of this doctrine; they made it public, and the people received it with joy: for the prieſts were conſtantly more looſe in their morals, and more indulgent to crimes, in proportion as they were more ſevere in their diſcipline, and more rigid in puniſhing the violation of ceremonies *.

Every temple then became an aſylum for villains; incredulity alone found there no refuge. Now as there are in all countries but few unbelievers, and many villains, the intereſt of the greateſt number was to agree with the prieſts.

Between the tropics, ſays a navigator, there are two iſlands oppoſite each other: in the one, no man is reckoned honeſt who does not believe in a certain number of abſurdities, and unleſs he be able to indure the greateſt itching without ſcratching: it is to the patience with which they ſupport their

* If the catholics be in general without morals, it is becauſe for the practice of real virtues, the prieſts of the papiſtical religion have conſtantly ſubſtituted that of ſuperſtitious ceremonies.

prurience

prurience that virtue is principally aſcribed. In the other iſle, no belief is impoſed on the inhabitants, and they may ſcratch where they itch, or even tickle themſelves till they laugh; but no one is reckoned virtuous who does not perform actions uſeful to ſociety. Muſt not the people diſcern the abſurdity of this religious morality? I anſwer, a prieſt, wrapt up in a ſolemn veſtment, affecting an auſtere manner, and obſcure language, and ſpeaking only in the name of God and religion, deludes the people by the eyes and the ears; and though the words Morality and Virtue are in his mouth void of meaning, it imports little: thoſe words, pronounced in a mortified tone, and by a man in the habit of penitence, always impoſe on human imbecillity.

Such were the tricks, and if I may ſo ſay, the ſplendid mummery, under which the prieſts concealed their ambition and perſonal intereſt. Their doctrine was moreover ſevere in certain reſpects, and that ſeverity ſerved ſtill more to deceive the vulgar. It was the box of Pandora that glittered without, but within were fanaticiſm, ignorance, ſuperſtition, and all thoſe evils that have ſucceſſively ravaged the earth. Now I aſk, when we ſee the miniſters of falſe religions in all ages employ the ſame means to increaſe their wealth and power *,

* If the prieſts make themſelves every where the depoſitaries and the diſtributors of charities, it is that they may appropriate a part of them, and by the diſtribution of the reſt keep the poor in their pay. Every method of acquiring money and

to preſerve their authority, and multiply the number of their ſlaves; when we find in every country the ſame abſurdities in falſe religions, the ſame impoſtors in their miniſters, and the ſame credulity in the people (37), if it be poſſible to imagine that there is eſſentially between men that inequality of underſtanding ſome ſuppoſe?

But ſuppoſing underſtanding and talents to be the effects of a particular cauſe, how can we perſuade ourſelves that men of great abilities, and conſequently endowed with that particular organiſation, could have believed the fables of Paganiſm, have adopted the opinions of the vulgar, and ſometimes become martyrs to the moſt palpable errors? Such facts, which are inexplicable if we ſuppoſe the underſtanding to be the product of organiſation, become ſimple and clear when it is regarded as an acquiſition. We do not then wonder that men of genius, in certain matters, ſhould have no ſuperiority in thoſe ſciences or queſtions they have never ſtudied. On this ſuppoſition, all the advantage a man of diſcernment can have over others, (and a conſiderable advantage it certainly is), reſults from a habit of atten-

and authority appears lawful to the prieſthood. It is without bluſhing that the catholic clergy charge the reparation of the churches on thoſe very people whoſe wealth they have exhauſted. The churches are the farms of the clergy; but, contrary to opulent landlords, they find the means of making others ſupport them.

tion,

tion, and a knowledge of the beſt methods to be taken in the examination of a queſtion; an advantage that is uſeleſs when not employed in the ſearch of that particular truth.

The uniformity of frauds (38) employed by the miniſters of the falſe religions, the reſemblance of the phantoms ſeen by them in the intellectual regions (39), and the equal credulity of the people, prove therefore that nature has not given to men that unequal portion of judgment which has been ſuppoſed; and that in morality, politics, and metaphyſics, if they form very different judgments of the ſame objects, it ariſes from their prejudices, and the indeterminate ſignifications that are annexed to the ſame expreſſions.

I ſhall only add, that if judgment be reduced to the ſcience or knowledge of the true relations objects have to each other, and that if whatever be the organiſation of individuals, that organiſation, as is demonſtrated by geometry, makes no change in the conſtant proportions with which objects ſtrike them, it neceſſarily follows, that the greater or leſs perfection of the organs of the ſenſes, can have no influence over our ideas, and that all men organiſed in the common manner will conſequently have an equal aptitude to judgment or underſtanding. The only method remaining to render this truth more evident, if that be poſſible, is to fortify the proofs by augmenting them. Let us endeavour this by another ſeries of propoſitions.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

There is no truth not reducible to a fact.

ALMOST all philoſophers agree, that the moſt ſublime truths once ſimplified and reduced to their plaineſt terms, may be converted into facts, and in that caſe preſent nothing more to the mind than this propoſition, *white is white, and black is black* (40). The aparent obſcurity of certain truths is not therefore in the truths themſelves, but in the confuſed manner of repreſenting them, and the impropriety of the words uſed in expreſſing them. Can they be reduced to ſimple facts? If every fact can be equally well perceived by every man organiſed (41) in the common manner, there is no truth they cannot comprehend. Now if all men can conceive the ſame truths, they muſt have eſſentially all the ſame aptitude to underſtanding.

But is it quite certain that every truth may be reduced to thoſe clear propoſitions abovementioned? I ſhall add only one proof to what the philoſophers have already given: I deduce it from the perfectibility of the human mind or underſtanding; experience demonſtrates that the underſtanding is capable of it. Now what does this perfectability ſuppoſe? Two things:

The

The one, that every truth is eſſentially comprehenſible by every mind.

The other, that every truth may be clearly repreſented.

The capacity that all men have to learn a trade proves this. If the moſt ſublime diſcoveries of the ancient mathematicians are at this day compriſed in the elements of geometry, and are underſtood by every ſtudent in that ſcience, it is becauſe thoſe diſcoveries are reduced to facts.

Truths being once brought to this point of ſimplicity, if there be ſome among them that men of ordinary capacity cannot comprehend, it is then, they may ſay, that borne up by experience, like the eagle, who alone among the feathered race can ſoar above the clouds and gaze upon the ſun, the man of genius alone can raiſe himſelf to the intellectual regions, and there ſuſtain the reſplendency of a new truth. Now nothing is more contrary to experience. Does a man of genius diſcover a truth, and repreſent it clearly? At the ſame inſtant all men of ordinary capacity ſeize it, and make it their own. The genius is an adventrous chief, that pierces through the regions of diſcoveries: he lays open the road, and men of common capacity ruſh in crouds after him. They have therefore the force neceſſary to follow him, otherwiſe genius would there penetrate alone.

Now

Now to the preſent day its only privilege is to make the firſt track *.

But if there be a period when the higheſt truths are attainable by common minds, when is that period? When freed from the obſcurity of words, and reduced to propoſitions more or leſs ſimple, they paſs from the empire of genius to that of the ſciences. Till then, like thoſe ſouls that they ſay wander in the celeſtial abodes, waiting till they can animate a body, and appear before the light, the truths yet unknown wander in the regions of diſcoveries, waiting for ſome genius to ſeize them, and tranſport them to this terreſtrial dwelling. Once deſcended on the earth, and perceived by ſuperior minds, they become a common property.

If in this age, ſays M. Voltaire, men commonly write better in proſe than in the laſt age, to what do the moderns owe this advantage? To the models they have before them. The moderns could not boaſt of this ſuperiority, if the genius of the laſt age, already converted into ſcience (42), was not, if I may ſo ſay, entered into the circulation. When the diſcoveries of genius are metamorphoſed into ſciences, each diſcovery depoſited in their temple becomes a public property; the temple is open to all. Whoever deſires to learn, learns, and is

* *It ſeems to follow from this paragraph, that every man who will, may underſtand all the truths in the ſublime geometry and the depths of fluxions, provided they be properly explained.*

ſure to make nearly ſo many feet of ſcience per day. The time fixed for apprenticeſhip is a proof of this. If the greateſt part of arts, at the degree of perfection to which they are now carried, may be regarded as the produce of the diſcoveries of a hundred men of genius placed end to end; to exerciſe thoſe arts it is neceſſary therefore that the workman unite them in himſelf, and know how properly to apply the ideas of thoſe hundred men of genius: what can be a ſtronger proof of the perfectability of the human mind, and of its aptitude to comprehend every ſort of truth?

If from the arts I paſs to the ſciences, it will be equally apparent that the truths, whoſe diſcoveries formerly deified their inventor, are now quite common. The ſyſtem of Newton is taught every where.

It is with the author of a new truth as with an aſtronomer, whom curioſity or the deſire of glory calls up to his obſervatory. He points his glaſs to the heavens, and in the immenſity of ſpace beholds a new ſtar or ſatellite. He calls his friends; they go up, and looking through the teleſcope, behold the ſame ſtar: for with organs nearly the ſame, men muſt diſcover the ſame objects.

If there were ideas that ordinary men could not attain, there would be truths diſcovered in the proceſs of ages, that could not be comprehended but by two or three men equally organiſed. The reſt of the human race would be ſubject in this reſpect

to

to an invincible ignorance. The diſcovery of the ſquare of the hypothenuſe being equal to the ſquare of the other two ſides of a triangle, could not be known but to another Pythagoras: the human mind could not be ſuſceptible of perfectibility; in a word, there would be truths reſerved to certain men only. Experience, on the contrary, ſhews us that the moſt ſublime diſcoveries, clearly repreſented, are conceivable by all. From hence ariſes that aſtoniſhment and ſhame we perceive when we ſay, *there is nothing more plain than that truth; how was it poſſible I did not perceive it before?* This is doubtleſs ſometimes the language of envy, as in the caſe of Chriſtopher Columbus. When he departed for America, the courtiers ſaid, *nothing is more ridiculous than ſuch an enterprize:* and at his return, *nothing was more eaſy than ſuch a diſcovery.* Though this be frequently the language of envy, is it never that of the heart? Is it not with the utmoſt ſincerity, when ſuddenly ſtruck by the evidence of a new idea, and preſently accuſtomed to regard it as trivial, that we think we always knew it.

If we have a clear idea of the expreſſion of a truth, and not only have it in our memory, but have alſo habitually preſent to our remembrance all the ideas of the compariſon from which it reſults, and if we be not blinded by any intereſt or ſuperſtition, that truth being preſently reduced to plaineſt terms, that is, to this ſimple propoſition, *that*

white is white, and black is black, is conceived almoſt as ſoon as propoſed.

In fact, if the ſyſtems of Locke and Newton, without being yet carried to the laſt degree of perſpicuity, are nevertheleſs generally taught and underſtood, men of a common organiſation can therefore comprehend the ideas of thoſe of the greateſt genius. Now to conceive their ideas (43), is to have the ſame aptitude to underſtanding. But if men can attain thoſe truths, and if their knowledge in general be conſtantly in proportion to the deſire they have to learn, does it follow that all can equally attain to truths hitherto unknown? This objection deſerves to be conſidered.

CHAP. XXIV.

The underſtanding neceſſary to comprehend the truths already known, is ſufficient to diſcover thoſe that are unknown.

A Truth is always the reſult of juſt compariſons made of the reſemblances or differences, the agreements or diſagreements between different objects. When a maſter would explain to his ſcholars the principles of a ſcience, and demonſtrate the truths already known, he places before their eyes the objects of the compariſon from which thoſe truths are to be deduced.

But

But when a new truth is to be ſought after, the inventor muſt in like manner have before his eyes the objects of compariſon from which that truth is to be deduced: But what ſhall preſent them to him? Chance; the common mother of all inventions. It appears therefore, that the mind of man, whether it follow the demonſtration of a truth, or whether it diſcover it, has in both caſes the ſame objects to compare, and the ſame relations to obſerve; in ſhort, the ſame operations to perform*. The underſtanding neceſſary to comprehend truths already known, is therefore ſufficient to diſcover thoſe that are unknown. Few men indeed attain the latter; but this is the effect of (1) the different ſituations in which they are placed, and that ſeries of circumſtances to which is given the name of chance; or (2) to the deſire, more or leſs cogent, that men have to diſtinguiſh themſelves, and conſequently to their greater or leſs paſſion for glory.

The paſſions can do all things. There is no girl ſo ſtupid that love will not make witty.

* I might even add, that it requires more attention to follow the demonſtration of a truth already known, than to diſcover one. Suppoſe, for example, it be a mathematical propoſition; the inventor in this caſe is already acquainted with geometry: he has its figures habitually preſent to his memory; he recollects them, ſo to ſay, involuntarily; and his attention is ſolely employed in obſerving their relations. With regard to the ſcholar, thoſe ſame figures not being habitually preſent to his memory, his attention is neceſſarily divided between the trouble of recollecting the figures, and of obſerving their relations.

What means does it not furniſh her with, to deceive the vigilance of her parents, to ſee and converſe with her lover? The moſt ſtupid frequently become the moſt inventive.

A man without paſſions is incapable of that degree of attention to which a ſuperior judgment is annexed: a ſuperiority that is perhaps leſs the effect of an extraordinary effort than an habitual attention.

But if all men have an equal aptitude to underſtanding, what can produce that difference we find between them?

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (page .) IF men, and eſpecially the Europeans, ſay the Banians, always in fear and miſtruſt of each other, are ever ready to war together; it is becauſe they are ſtill animated with the ſpirit of their firſt parents, *Cutteri* and *Toddicaſtrée*. This *Cutteri*, who was the ſecond ſon of *Pourans*, and deſtined by God to people one of the four quarters of the earth, turned his ſteps toward the weſt. The firſt object he met was a woman named *Toddicaſtrée*. She was armed with a *chucbery*, and he with a ſword. As ſoon as they perceived each other, they attacked and fought together for two days and a half: the third day, tired with the combat, they parlied, they loved, married, and lay together: they had children, that, like their progenitors, are always ready to attack when they met together.

2. (p. 156.) That the moſt witty and the moſt thoughtful are ſometimes melancholy, I allow; but they are not witty and thoughtful becauſe they are melancholy, but melancholy becauſe they are thoughtful. In fact, it is not to his melancholy but to his wants that a man owes his diſcernment: want alone draws him from his natural indolence. If I think, it is not becauſe I am ſtrong or weak, but becauſe I have more or leſs intereſt to think. When they ſay of misfortune that it is the *great teacher of man*, they ſay nothing more than that misfortune, and the deſire to be freed from it, obliges us to think. Why does the deſire of glory frequently produce the ſame effect? Becauſe glory is to ſome a want. Moreover, neither Rabelais, nor Fontenelle, nor Fontaine, nor Scarron were eſteemed melancholic, yet nobody denies their ſuperiority of wit, greater or leſs.

3. (p. 180.) What I here ſay of goodneſs may be equally applied to beauty. The different ideas we form of it ariſes, almoſt always, from the explications we have heard made of the word in our infancy. When we have heard a woman of a particular figure conſtantly extolled, that figure is fixed in our mind as a model of beauty; and we always judge of other women according to the greater or leſs

reſemblance they have to that model. From hence the diverſity of our taſtes, and the reaſon why we prefer a woman of an elegant ſhape, to one that is groſs, and who is preferred by another.

4. (p. 183.) This deciſon of the church ſhows the ridicule of a judgment that has been paſſed on me. How, they have ſaid, can I maintain that friendſhip is founded on want and a reciprocal intereſt? But if the church, and the Jeſuits themſelves agree, that God, though all good and powerful, is not beloved for himſelf; it is not then without ſome private reaſon that I love my friend. Now of what nature can this reaſon be? It is not of the ſort that produces hatred; that is a ſentiment of trouble and grief; on the contrary, it is of the nature of thoſe that produce love, that is, a ſentiment of pleaſure. The judgments that have paſſed on me relative to this matter are ſo abſurd, that it is not without ſhame I here reply to them.

5. (p. 185.) The primitive church did not cavil with mankind about their belief: Syneſius is a proof of this. He lived in the fifth century; and was a Platonic philoſopher. Theophilus, then biſhop of Alexandria, deſirous of doing himſelf honour by a converſion, entreated Syneſius to be baptized by him. The philoſopher conſented, on condition that he ſhould preſerve his opinions. A ſhort time after, the inhabitants of Ptolomais aſked Syneſius for their biſhop. Syneſius refuſed the epiſcopacy, and his reaſons for it he gives in his hundred and fifth letter to his brother. "The more I examine myſelf, he ſays, the leſs I find that I am proper to be "a biſhop. I have hitherto divided my life between the "ſtudy of philoſophy and amuſement. When I go out of "my cloſet, I give myſelf up to pleaſure. Now it is not "right, they ſay, that a biſhop be joyous: he is a divine "man. I am beſide incapable of all application to civil and "domeſtic affairs. I have a wife that I love, and it is equally impoſſible for me, either to quit her, or only ſee her in "ſecret. This Theophilus knows; but this is not all. The "mind cannot quit the truths that have been demonſtrated "to it. Now the dogmas of philoſophy are contrary to thoſe "a biſhop ought to teach. How can I preach the creation of "the ſoul after the body, the end of the world, the reſur-

"rection,

" rection, and in ſhort things that I do not believe? I cannot. " bring myſelf to falſify.

" A philoſopher, they ſay, can accommodate himſelf to the " weakneſs of the vulgar, and conceal thoſe truths he can- " not believe. Yes; but in that caſe the diſſimulation " muſt be abſolutely neceſſary. I would be a biſhop if I " could preſerve my opinions and talk of them with my " friends; and if, to keep the people in their errors, they would " not force me to entertain them with fables. But if a biſhop " muſt preach the contrary to what he thinks, and think " with the people, I ſhall refuſe the epiſcopacy. I do not " know if there be truths that ought to be held from the vul- " gar; but I know, that a biſhop ought not to preach the con- " trary of what he believes. The truth ought to be reſpect- " ed as the Divinity, and I proteſt before God that I will ne- " ver falſify my ſentiments in my preachings." Syneſius, notwithſtanding his repugnance, was ordained a biſhop, and kept his word. The hymns he compoſed are nothing more than expoſitions of the ſyſtems of Pythagoras, Plato, and the Stoics, adjuſted to the dogmas and worſhip of the Chriſtians.

6. (p. 187.) Pious calumny is alſo a virtue of new creation. Rouſſeau and I have been its victims. How many paſſages of our works have been falſely cited in the mandates of the holy biſhops? There are therefore now holy calumniators.

7. (ibid.) The clergy who call themſelves humble, reſemble Diogenes, whoſe pride was ſeen through the holes in his cloak.

8. (ibid.) Read on this ſubject the laſt chapters of the rules of St. Benedict; you will there ſee that if the monks be obdurate and wicked, it is what they ought to be.

The generality of men, aſſured of their ſubſiſtence, and without concern on that account, become inſenſible: they do not deplore in others the evils they cannot ſuffer. Beſide, the happineſs or miſery of a monk, confined in a cloiſter, is entirely independent of that of his relations and fellow-citizens. The monks therefore muſt regard the men of the world with the ſame indifference a traveller regards the beaſts he meets in a foreſt. It is the monaſtic laws that condemn the religious orders to inhumanity. In fact, what is it that produces in men the ſentiment of benevolence? The aſſiſtance,

either

either remote or near, that they may afford each other. This is the principle that unites men in ſociety. Do the laws eſtrange my intereſt from that of the public? From that moment I become wicked. From thence the ſeverity of arbitrary governments, and the reaſon why monks and deſpots are in general the moſt inhuman of men.

9 (p. 188) They formerly believed that God, according to the difference of times, could have different ideas of virtue; the church has clearly explained this doctrine in the council of Bail, held on account of the Huſſites; who having proteſted againſt admitting any doctrine that was not contained in the ſcriptures; the fathers of the council informed them, by the mouth of cardinal Caſan "That the ſcriptures were not abſolutely neceſſary to the preſervation of the church, but "only to its better regulation: that they ſhould be always "interpreted according to the preſent ſtate of the church, "which by changing its ſentiments obliges us to believe that "God changes his alſo."

10. (ibid.) They boaſt much of the reſtitutions that religion cauſes to be made. I have ſometimes ſeen the reſtitution of copper, but never of gold. The monks have not yet reſtored the heritage, nor the catholic princes the kingdoms that have been raviſhed from the Americans.

11. (p. 189.) It is but juſtice to arm intolerance againſt an intolerant; as a prince ought to oppoſe an army againſt the army of his enemy.

12. (ibid.) On opening the Encyclopedia at the article *Virtue*, how was I ſurpriſed to find, not a definition of virtue, but a declamation on the ſubject. *O man!* cries the compoſer of that article, *wouldſt thou know what is virtue? Enter into thyſelf. Its definition is at the bottom of thy heart.* But why was it not in like manner at the bottom of the compoſer's heart, and if it were there, why did he not give it us? Few authors, I confeſs, think ſo highly of their readers, and ſo meanly of themſelves. If that writer had reflected more on the word Virtue, he would have perceived, that it conſiſted in the knowledge of what men owe to each other, and that it conſequently ſuppoſes the formation of ſocieties. Before this formation, what good or evil could be done to a ſociety not yet exiſting? A man of the woods, a man naked and without

out

put language, might eaſily acquire a clear idea of ſtrength or weakneſs, but not of juſtice and equity.

A man born in a deſart iſland, and abandoned to himſelf, would live there without vice or virtue. He could not exerciſe either of them. What then are we to underſtand by the words Virtuous and Vicious? Actions uſeful or detrimental to ſociety. This idea, clear and ſimple, is, in my opinion, preferable to all obſcure and inflated declamations on virtue.

A preacher, who in his ſermons gives no clear definition of virtue; a moraliſt, who maintains that all men are good, and does not believe any of them unjuſt, is ſometimes a ſot, but more frequently a knave, that would be thought honeſt merely becauſe he is a man.

To pretend to draw a faithful portrait of humanity, perhaps a man ſhould be virtuous, and, to a certain point, irreproachable.

What I know of the matter, is, that the moſt honeſt are not they who ſuppoſe men to have the moſt virtue. If I would be well aſſured of mine, I would ſuppoſe myſelf to be a citizen of Rome, or of Greece; and I would aſk myſelf, whether in the ſituation of Codrus or Regulus, Brutus or Leonidas, I ſhould have done the ſame actions. The leaſt heſitation in this caſe would teach me that I was but weak in virtue. Of every ſort the ſtrong are rare, and the lukewarm common.

13. (p. 190.) The humanity of M. Fenelon, is renowned. One day, a vicar boaſted, in his preſence, of having aboliſhed dancing on a Sunday, in his village. Maſter vicar, ſaid the archbiſhop, let us be leſs ſevere towards others; let us abſtain from dancing ourſelves, but let the peaſants dance if they like it. Why ſhould we not let them for a ſhort time forget their miſery? Fenelon, juſt, and always virtuous, lived a part of his days in diſgrace. Boſſuet, his rival in genius, was leſs honeſt, and always in favour.

14. (p. 193.) The morality of Jeſus, and that of the Jeſuits, have nothing in common; the one is deſtructive of the other. This is evident, by the extracts that the parliaments have given. But why do the clergy inceſſantly repeat, that the ſame ſtroke has deſtroyed the jeſuits and religion? It is, becauſe, in the eccleſiaſtical language, religion and ſuperſtition are ſynonimous. Now ſuperſtition, or the papal power, has, perhaps, really ſuffered by the baniſhment of that order.

For

For the reſt, let not the Jeſuits flatter themſelves, that they will ever be recalled into France and Spain. It is known by what proſcriptions their recall would be followed, and to what exceſs the cruelty of an enraged Jeſuit is carried.

15. (p. 193.) The fear with which the Jeſuits were regarded, ſeemed to have ſet them above all attack. To brave their hatred and their intrigues, ſuch men as Chauvelin were neceſſary, noble ſouls, generous citizens, and friends to the public. To deſtroy ſuch an order, courage alone was not ſufficient; genius was alſo requiſite. It was neceſſary to ſhow the people the poignard of the regicide, wrapped up in the veil of reſpect and devotion: to diſcover the hypocriſy of the Jeſuits through the cloud of incenſe they ſpread around the throne and the altars; to embolden the timid prudence of the parliaments, and make them clearly diſtinguiſh between the extraordinary and the impoſſible.

16. (p. 194.) It is with the judgment as with virtue. The judgment applied to the various ſciences of geometry, phyſics, &c. is judgment in all countries. The judgment, when applied to the falſe ſciences of magic, theology, &c. is local. The firſt of theſe, is to the other what the money of Africa, named the ſhell *Coris*, is to the money of gold and ſilver; the one has circulation among ſome Negro nations, the other over the whole earth.

17. (p. 195.) On what ſhould we eſtabliſh the principles of a good morality? On a great number of facts and obſervations. It is, therefore, to the premature formation of certain principles, that we ought, perhaps, to attribute their obſcurity and falſity. In morality, as in all other ſciences, what ſhould be done before we form a ſyſtem? Collect the materials neceſſary for the conſtruction. We cannot now be ignorant, that an experimental morality, founded on the ſtudy of men, and of things, as far ſurpaſſes a ſpeculative and theological morality, as experimental philoſophy exceeds a vague and uncertain theory. It is becauſe religious morality never had experiment for its baſis, that the theological empire was ever regarded as the region of darkneſs.

18. (p. 196.) The monks, themſelves, have not always held chaſtity in equal eſteem. Some of them, called Mamillaires, have held, that a man might, without ſin, feel the boſom of a nun. There is no act of laſciviouſneſs, that ſuperſtition has not in ſome part made an act of virtue. In Japan, the Bonzes may

may love men, but not women.' In certain cantons of Peru, the acts of the Greek loves were acts of piety; it was an homage to the gods, and rendered publicly in their temples.

19. (p. 196.) Mrs. Macauley, the illuſtrious author of a Hiſtory of England, is the Cato of London, "Never, ſays ſhe, has "the view of a deſpotic monarch, or prince, foiled the pu-"rity of my looks."

20. (ibid.) It is an abſurdity common to all nations, to expect humanity and ſcience in their tyrant. To attempt to make good ſcholars, without puniſhing the idle, and rewarding the diligent, is a folly. To aboliſh the law that puniſhes theft and murder, and require that men ſhould not ſteal or murder, is a voluntary contradiction. To deſire that a prince ſhould apply himſelf to the affairs of the ſtate, and that he ſhould have no intereſt to apply himſelf to them, that is, that he ſhould not be puniſhed, if he neglect them: to deſire, in ſhort, that a man above the law, that is without law, ſhould be always humane and virtuous, is to deſire an effect without a cauſe. Caſt men bound into the den of a tyger, and he will devour them. The deſpot is the tyger.

21. (ibid.) The Calmucks marry as many wives as they pleaſe; they have beſide, as many concubines as they can maintain. Inceſt is no crime among them. They ſee nothing more in a man and a woman, than a male and a female. A father without ſcruple marries his daughter: no law forbids.

22. (ibid.) Every one ſays, I have the moſt juſt ideas of virtue: whoever does not think as I do, is wrong. Every one laughs at his neighbour. Every one points with his finger, and never laughs at himſelf but under the name of another. The ſame inquiſitor who condemned Galileo, doubtleſs, condemned the wickedneſs and ſtupidity of the judges of Socrates: he did not think that he ſhould one day be like them, the ſcorn of his own age, and of poſterity. Does the Sorbonne think itſelf deſpicable for having condemned Rouſſeau, Marmontel, myſelf, &c.? No; it is the ſtranger who thinks ſo, in its ſtead.

23. (p. 198.) Barillon was exiled to Amboiſe, and Richelieu, who ſent him thither, was the firſt miniſter, ſays cardinal de Retz, who dared to puniſh in the magiſtrates, *that noble firmneſs with which they repreſented to the king thoſe truths, for defence of which their oaths obliged them to expoſe their lives.*

24. (p. 198.)

24. (p. 198.) If it be true, that virtue is useful to a state, it must be also useful to give clear ideas of it, and to engrave them, in the most tender infancy, on the memories of men. The definition I have given of virtue in the Treatise on the Mind, Disc. iii. chap. 13. appears to me to be the only one that is just. "Virtue, I have there said, is nothing more than "the desire of public happiness. The general welfare is the "object of virtue; and the actions it enjoins, are the means it "employs to accomplish that object. The idea of virtue, I "have added, must therefore be every where the same."

If in various ages and countries men appear to have formed different ideas of virtue, if philosophers have, in consequence, "treated the idea of virtue as arbitrary, it is because they have "taken for virtue itself, the several means it makes use of to "accomplish its object, that is to say, the several actions it "enjoins. These actions have certainly been sometimes very "different, because the interests of nations change, according "to the age and their situation; and lastly, because the public "good may, to a certain degree, be promoted by different "means."

The entrance of foreign merchandize permitted to-day in Germany, as advantageous to its commerce, and conformable to the good of the state, may be to-morrow forbid. To-morrow the purchaser may be declared criminal, if by some circumstances that purchase become prejudicial to the national interest. "The same actions may therefore become successively useful and prejudicial to a nation, and merit by turns "the name of virtuous and vicious, without the idea of virtue's suffering any change, or ceasing to be the same!" Nothing is more agreeable to the natural law, than this idea. Could it be imagined that principles so sound, and so conformable to the public good, would have been condemned? Could it be imagined that a man would be persecuted, who had defined, "true probity to be the habitude of actions useful to "our country, and regarded as vicious every action detrimental to society?" Is it not evident that such a writer could not advance maxims contrary to the public good, without contradicting himself. Such, however, was the power of envy and hypocrisy, that I was persecuted by the same clergy, who, without opposition, had suffered the audacious Bellarmin to be

elevated

elevated to the rank of a cardinal, for having maintained, *that if the pope forbids the exercise of virtue, and command that of vice; the Roman church, under pain of a sin, was obliged to abandon virtue for vice, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare.* The pope therefore, according to this Jesuit, had the right of destroying the natural law, and of stifling in man every idea of justice and injustice, and, in short, of replunging morality into that chaos, from which philosophy has drawn it with so much pains. Did the church ought to approve such principles? Why did the pope suffer their publication? Because they flattered his pride.

Papal-ambition, always greedy of power, is never scrupulous in the choice of the means. In what country has not the maxim the most abominable, the most contrary to the public good, been tolerated by the power to whom it is favourable? In what country have they constantly punished the wretch who has incessantly repeated to the prince, "Thy power over thy "subjects is without bounds: thou mayest at thy will despoil "them of their property, load them with fetters, and deliver "them up to the most cruel tortures." It is always with impunity, that the fox repeats to the lyon, *You do them, Sire, a great deal of honour in making them beggars.*

Vous leur faites, Seigneur,
En les croquant beaucoup d' honneur.

The only expressions that cannot be repeated to princes without danger, are those that fix the bounds, which justice, the public good, and the law of nations, set to their authority.

25. (p. 199.) By metaphysics, I do not mean that jargon transmitted by the Egyptian priests to Pythagoras, by him to Plato, and by Plato to us, and which is still taught in some schools: but I mean, with Bacon, the knowledge of the first principles of any art or science whatever. Poetry, music, and painting, have their first principles, founded on a constant and general observation; they have, therefore, their metaphysics.

As to the scholastic metaphysics, is it a scienc No: but I have just said a jargon; it is tolerable only to th false mind that can accommodate expressions void of sense: to the ignorant, who take words for things; and to knaves who want to make dupes. By a man of sense it is despised.

All metaphysics, not founded on observation, consist solely in the art of abusing words. It is this metaphysics, that in the land

land of chimeras, is continually running after bladders of ſoap, from which it can never get any thing but air.

Now, baniſhed to the ſchools of theology, it ſtill divides them by its ſubtilities, and may one day again light up fanaticiſm, and again make human blood to ſtream.

I compare theſe two ſorts of metaphyſics to the two different philoſophies of Democritus and Plato. The firſt raiſes itſelf by degrees from earth to heaven, and the other deſcends by degrees from heaven to earth. The ſyſtem of Plato was founded on the clouds, and the breath of reaſon has already diſſipated the clouds, and the ſyſtem.

26. (p. 200.) Men have always been governed by words. If half of the weight of the ſilver in a crown be diminiſhed, and its numeral value ſtill preſerved, the ſoldier thinks he has nearly the ſame pay. The magiſtrate, authoriſed to judge definitively to a certain amount, that is, to ſuch a weight of ſilver, muſt not judge to the amount of half that ſum. In like manner are men duped by words, and by their uncertain ſignifications. Writers are conſtantly talking about *good morals*, without attaching any clear ideas to thoſe words. Can they be ignorant, that good morals is one of thoſe vague expreſſions, of which every nation forms different ideas? If there be univerſal good morals, there are alſo thoſe that are local, and conſequently, I can, without offending good morals, have a ſeraglio at Conſtantinople, and not at Vienna.

27. (p. 202.) Theological diſputes never are, and never can be, any thing more than diſputes about words. If theſe diſputes have frequently occaſioned great commotions on the earth, it is becauſe princes, ſaid M. Chalotais, ſeduced by ſome theologians *, have taken a part in theſe quarrels. Let governments deſpiſe their diſputes; and the theologians, after railing, and reciprocally accuſing each other of hereſy, &c. will grow tired of talking, without underſtanding each other, and without being underſtood. The fear of ridicule will make them ſilent.

28. (ibid.) It is to the diſputes about words, that we are in like manner to refer almoſt all the accuſations of atheiſm.

* *Perhaps it has happened, at leaſt as frequently, from the knavery of princes, who by encouraging one party againſt the other, have weakened them both, and conſequently increaſed their own ſtrength.*

There

There is no man of underſtanding who does not acknowledge an active power in nature. There is, therefore, no atheiſt.

He is not an atheiſt who ſays, that motion is God; becauſe, in fact, motion is incomprehenſible, as we have no clear idea of it, as it does not manifeſt itſelf but by its effects; and laſtly, becauſe by it all things are performed in the univerſe.

He is not an atheiſt, who ſays, on the contrary, that motion is not God: becauſe, motion is not a Being, but a mode of Being.

They are not atheiſts, who maintain that motion is eſſential to matter, and regard it as the inviſible and motive force that ſpreads itſelf through all its parts. Do we ſee the ſtars continually changing their places, and rolling perpetually round their centre: do we ſee all bodies deſtroyed and reproduced inceſſantly, under different forms; in ſhort, do we ſee nature in an eternal fermentation and diſſolution? Who then can deny, that motion is, like extenſion, inherent in bodies, and that motion is not the cauſe of what is? In fact, ſays Mr. Hume, if we always give the names of cauſe and effect to the concomitance of two facts, and that wherever there are bodies, there is motion; we ought then to regard motion as the univerſal ſoul of matter, and the divinity that alone penetrates its ſubſtance. But are the philoſophers of this laſt opinion atheiſts? No: they equally acknowledge an unknown force in the univerſe. Are even thoſe who have no ideas of God, atheiſts? No; becauſe then all men would be ſo; becauſe no one has a clear idea of the Divinity: becauſe in this caſe every obſcure idea is equal to none, and laſtly, to acknowledge the incomprehenſibility of God, is, as M. Robinet proves, to ſay by a different turn of expreſſion, that we have no idea of him.

29: (p. 204.) Man, to be happy, muſt have deſires, ſuch as employ him, and ſych whoſe objects his labour or his talents can procure him. Among the deſires of this ſort, the moſt proper to keep him from diſguſt is that of glory. This ſprings up equally in all countries. It ſometimes happens, that the ſearch after glory expoſes a man to too much danger: what rational motive can excite him to the purſuit of it in a kingdom where they perſecute ſuch men as Voltaire, Monteſquieu, &c. If France, ſay the Engliſh, be reckoned a delicious country, it is for thoſe that are rich, and do not think.

30. (p. 206.) Far from condemning a ſyſtematic ſpirit, I admire it in great men. It is to the efforts made to deſtroy or defend thoſe ſyſtems that we doubtleſs owe an infinity of diſcoveries.

Let men therefore continue to explain, by a ſingle principle, if it be poſſible, all the phyſical phenomena in nature: but be continually on their guard againſt thoſe principles; let them be conſidered merely as one of the different keys we may ſucceſſively try, that we may at laſt find that which ſhall open the ſanctuary of nature. But above all, let us not confound tales with ſyſtems; the latter muſt be ſupported by a great number of facts. It is theſe alone that ſhould be taught in the public ſchools: provided however that we do not ſtill maintain them to be true, a hundred years after experience has proved them to be falſe.

31. (p. 209.) Whence comes it, it was ſaid to a certain cardinal, that there have been in all times prieſts, religions, and ſorcerers? Becauſe, he replied, there have always been bees and hornets, labourers and idlers, knaves and dupes.

32. (ibid.) Without examining if it be the intereſt of the public to admit the doctrine of the immortality of the ſoul, I ſhall obſerve that at leaſt this dogma has not always been politically regarded as uſeful. It took its riſe in the ſchools of Plato; but Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, thought it ſo dangerous, that he forbid it to be preached in his dominions on pain of death.

33 (p. 213.) It is known that the ancient Druids were animated with the ſame ſpirit as the Popiſh prieſts now are; that they had, before them, invented excommunication; that like them they would command over people and kings; and that they pretended to have, like the inquiſitors, the power of life and death, among all nations where they were eſtabliſhed.

34. (p. 216.) I one day attended on a repreſentation the clergy of a German court made to their prince: I bore the marvellous ring, which makes men ſay and write, not what they would have others hear and read, but what they really think. Without the virtue of my ring, I ſhould doubtleſs never have heard or read the following diſcourſe.

When the clergy thought they had convinced the prince that religion was loſt in his dominions; that debauchery and impiety boldly ſtalked abroad; that the holy days were profaned by labour;

bour; that the liberty of the preſs ſhook the foundations of his throne and of the altars, and that in conſequence the biſhops enjoined the ſovereign to arm the laws againſt the liberty of thought, to protect the church and deſtroy its enemies: the following were the words I ſeemed to hear in that adreſs.

"Prince, your clergy are rich and powerful, and would be "ſtill more ſo. It is not the loſs of morality and religon, but "that of their authority, they deplore. They deſire to have the "greateſt authority, and your people are without reſpect for the "ſacerdotal power. We therefore declare them to be impious; "we exhort you to reanimate their piety, and for that purpoſe "to give your clergy more authority over them. The mo"ment choſen to accuſe the people, and irritate you againſt "them, is not perhaps the moſt favourable. Your ſoldiers "have never been ſo brave, your artiſans more induſtrious, "your citizens more zealous for the public welfare, and con"ſequently more virtuous. They will tell you, without doubt, "that the people moſt immediately ſubject to the clergy, that "the modern Romans have neither the ſame valour, nor the "ſame love for their country, nor conſequently the ſame vir"tue. They will add, perhaps, that Spain and Portugal, "where the clergy command ſo imperiouſly, are ruined and "laid waſte by ignorance, ſloth, and ſuperſtition; and, in "ſhort, that among all nations, they who are generally ho"noured and reſpected, are thoſe ſame enlightened people to "whom the Catholic church will always give the name of im"pious.

"Let your ears, O prince, be for ever cloſed againſt ſuch re"preſentations; that, in concert with your clergy, you may "ſpread darkneſs over your dominions, and know that a "people ſkilful, rich, and without ſuperſtition, are, in the eyes "of the prieſt, a people without morals. Is it, in fact, the rich "and induſtrious citizen, who has for example, all the reſpect "for the virtue of continence that it deſerves?

"It is, they will ſay, in this reſpect with the preſent age, as "with thoſe that are paſt. Charlemagne, created a ſaint for "liberality toward the prieſthood, loved women as well as "Francis I. and Henry VIII. Henry III. king of France, "had a taſte leſs decent. Henry IV. Elizabeth, Lewis XIV. "and queen Anne careſſed their miſtreſſes, or their lovers, with "the ſame hands with which they laid their enemies in the

"duſt. They will add, that the monks themſelves have al-
"moſt always enjoyed in ſecret forbidden pleaſures; and in
"ſhort, that without changing the natural conſtitutions of the
"inhabitants, it is very difficult to keep them from that damn-
"able diſpoſition that carries them toward women. There is
"however one method to prevent it, and that is to make them
"poor. It is not from a ſound and well fed body that the de-
"mon of the fleſh can be driven: it is to be effected only by
"prayer and faſting.

"That, by the example of ſome of your neighbours, your
"majeſty therefore will permit us to ſtrip your ſubjects of all
"their ſuperfluities, to tithe their lands, to pillage their pro-
"perty, and to keep them in the ſtricteſt neceſſity. If, touched
"by theſe pious remonſtrances, your majeſty ſhall regard our
"prayers, may benedictions pour down upon you! No praiſe
"can equal ſo meritorious an action. But in an age when cor-
"ruption infects all minds, when impiety hardens every heart,
"may we hope that your majeſty and your miniſters will
"adopt a counſel ſo ſalutary, a method ſo eaſy to ſecure the
"continence of your ſubjects?

"With regard to the profanation of holidays, our remon-
"ſtrances may again appear abſurd. The man who labours
"on Sundays and holidays does not get drunk, or run after
"women; he injures no one, he ſerves his country and his fa-
"mily, and augments the commerce of his nation.

"Of two ſtates equally numerous and powerful, let one of
"them make, as in Spain, 130 holidays in the year, and
"ſometimes the day after; and the other, on the contrary,
"keep no ſaints days, the latter of theſe people will have 80
"or 90 days of labour more than the other, and can furniſh
"the articles of its commerce at a lower price: its lands will
"be better cultivated, its harveſt more abundant, and the ba-
"lance of trade will be in its favour. The latter therefore, be-
"ing more rich and powerful than the former, may one day
"give it laws. There is nothing in common between the na-
"tional intereſt and that of the clergy. The prieſt, ſolely jealous
"of command, what would he do? Contract the mind of the
"prince, and extinguiſh in him even the lights of nature. A
"nation governed by ſuch a prince will, ſooner or later, be-
"come a prey to ſome neighbour more rich, more learned, and
"leſs ſuperſtitious. So that the grandeur of the Catholic cler-

"gy

" gy is always deſtructive of the grandeur of a ſtate. Do the
" prieſts declaim againſt the profanation of holidays? Be not
" deceived, it is not the love of God, but that of their autho-
" rity, by which they are influenced. We learn from expe-
" rience, that the leſs a man frequents the temples, the leſs
" reſpect he has for their miniſters, and the leſs authority thoſe
" miniſters have over him. Now if power be the ruling paſ-
" ſion of a prieſt, it is of little conſequence to him whether a
" holiday be to the labourer a day of debauch; whether, on
" going from the temple, he run after wenches and frequent
" public houſes, and paſs the remainder of the day in ebriety.
" The more ſins, the more expiations and offerings; the more
" riches and power is acquired by the prieſt. What is the in-
" tereſt of the church? To multiply vices? What does it aſk
" of men? To be ſtupid and wicked. Behold, Sire, with
" what we are reproached by the impious. With regard to the
" liberty of the preſs, if your clergy riſe up ſo violently againſt
" it, if they tell you inceſſantly that it ſaps the foundation of
" the law, and renders religion ridiculous, believe it not.

" It is not that your clergy do not perceive, with the ſolid
" and ingenious author of the *Engliſh Inveſtigator*, that truth is
" proof againſt ridicule, and that ridicule is the touchſtone of
" truth. A ridicule caſt on a demonſtration is like mud thrown
" againſt marble: it ſoils it for a moment, it dries; the rain
" comes, and the ſpot diſappears. To agree that a religion
" cannot ſtand againſt ridicule, is to allow it to be falſe. Does
" not the Catholic church repeat inceſſantly that the gates of
" hell ſhall never prevail againſt it? Yes; but prieſts are
" not religion. Ridicule may weaken their authority, and
" fetter their ambition; they therefore conſtantly cry out
" againſt the liberty of the preſs, and entreat your majeſty to
" forbid your ſubjects the practice of writing and thinking,
" that you may deprive them in this reſpect of the privileges
" of men, and conſequently ſhut the mouth of every one that
" can inſtruct mankind.

" If ſo many demands appear indiſcreet, and that, jealous of
" the happineſs of your people, you would, Sire, rule over in-
" telligent inhabitants only, know, that the ſame conduct
" that will render you dear to your ſubjects, and reſpectable to
" ſtrangers, will be imputed to you as a crime by your clergy.
" Dread the vengeance of a powerful body, and for the future

" reſign to them your ſword; it is then that, aſſured of the piety " of your people, the ſacerdotal power may again aſſume over " them its ancient authority, ſee from day to day that authority " increaſe, and at laſt make uſe of it to bring you into ſub- " jection.

" We deſire the more earneſtly that your majeſty would re- " gard our ſupplication, and authorize our demand, as it will " deliver us from a ſecret inquietude, that is not without foun- " dation. Quakers may eſtabliſh themſelves in your domini- " ons; they may propoſe to communicate, gratis, to the cities, " towns, and villages, all inſtruction, moral and religious, that " is neceſſary: they might moreover form certain companies of " finance, who might undertake this enterprize of inſtruction at " a diſcount, and furniſh it ſtill cheaper and cheaper. Who " can ſay whether the magiſtrates might not then take it in " their heads to ſeize on our revenues, and employ them to " diſcharge a part of the national debt, and by that mean make " your nation the moſt reſpectable in Europe. Now it is of " little conſequence to us, Sire, whether your people be happy " and reſpectable, but is of great conſequence that the ſacerdo- " tal body be rich and powerful."

This is what the repreſentations of the clergy ſeemed to me to contain. I ſhall not weary myſelf with conſidering the addreſs, the artifice with which the prieſts have in all countries continually aſked in the name of heaven, the power and riches of the earth. I admire the confidence they have always had in the weakneſs of the people, and eſpecially men in power. But what moſt of all ſurpriſes me is, (when I reflect on the ages of ignorance,) to find that in this reſpect moſt ſovereigns have always been out of the power of the clergy.

35. (p. 217.) There are ſome who ſay that at the moment of our birth God engraves on our hearts the precepts of the natural law. Experience proves the contrary. If God is to be regarded as the author of the laws of nature, it is as being the author of corporeal ſenſibility, which is the mother of human reaſon. This ſort of ſenſibility, at the time of the union of men in ſociety, obliged them, as I have already ſaid, to make among themſelves conventions and laws, the aſſemblage of which compoſes what is called the laws of nature. But have thoſe laws been the ſame among different nations? No: their greater or leſs perfection was always in proportion to the pro-

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greſs of the human mind; to the greater or leſs extent of knowledge that ſocieties acquired, of what was uſeful or prejudicial; and this knowledge has been in all nations the produce of time, experience, and reflection.

To make us ſee in God the immediate author of the laws of nature, and conſequently of all juſtice, ought the theologians to admit him to have paſſions, ſuch as love, or vengeance? Ought they to repreſent him as a Being ſuſceptible of predilection; in ſhort, as an aſſemblage of incoherent qualities? Is it in ſuch a God that we can diſcern the author of juſtice? Can we thus endeavour to reconcile irreconcileables, and confound truth with falſhood, without perceiving the impoſſibility of ſuch a connection? It is time that men, deaf to theological contradictions, liſten to nothing but the doctrines of wiſdom: for, St. Paul ſays, "It is high time to awake out of ſleep; "the night (*of ignorance*) is far ſpent, the day (*of ſcience*) is at "hand; let us therefore put on the armour of light," to deſtroy the phantoms of darkneſs, and for that purpoſe let us reſtore to men their natural liberty, and the free exerciſe of reaſon.

36. (p. 218.) Can it be, that among almoſt all nations the idea of ſanctity is annexed to the obſervance of a ritual ceremony, an ablution, &c. Can men be ſtill ignorant that the only citizens conſtantly virtuous and humane, are thoſe that are happy in their character. In fact, who among the devout are the moſt eſtimable? They that, full of confidence in God, forget there is a hell. Who, on the contrary, among the ſame devout are the moſt odious and inhuman? They that, timid, diſcontented, and unhappy, ſee hell continually open before them. Why are the devout in general the torment of their dwellings, railing inceſſantly at their ſervants, and making themſelves hateful? Becauſe, having the idea of the devil before them, and fearing perpetually to be carried away by him, their fear and their unhappineſs render them malignant. If youth be in general more virtuous and more humane than age, it is becauſe, having more deſires and more health, they are more happy. Nature did wiſely, ſaid an Engliſhman, to limit the life of man to 80 or 100 years. If heaven had prolonged his old age he would have become too wicked.

37. (p. 221.) If in Tartary, under the name of Dalai Lama, the grand pontiff be immortal; in Italy, under the name of Pope, their pontiff is infallible. If in the country of the

Mongales the vicar of the grand Lama receive the title of Kutuchta, that is vicar of the living God, in Europe the Pope bears the ſame title. At Bagdat, in Tartary, at Japan, if with a deſign to debaſe and ſubdue their kings, the pontiffs, under the name of caliphs, lama, and dairo, have made emperors kiſs their feet; and if theſe pontiffs, when mounted on a mule, have obliged the emperors to take the bridle and lead them through the ſtreets: has not the pope exacted the ſame ſervility from the monarchs of the Weſt? The pontiffs in every country have therefore made the ſame pretenſions, and the princes the ſame ſubmiſſion.

If the deputies for the office of caliph have made human blood to ſtream in the Eaſt, the diſputes for the papacy have in like manner made it ſtream in the Weſt. Six popes have aſſaſſinated their predeceſſors, and ſet themſelves in their place. The popes, ſays Baronius, were not then men but monſters.

Have we not every where ſeen the name of orthodox given to the ſtrongeſt religion, and that of hereſy to the weakeſt? Every where has the ſacerdotal power been productive of fanaticiſm, and fanaticiſm of murder. Every where have men ſuffered themſelves to be burned for theological abſurdities, and given in this manner equal proofs of obſtinacy and courage.

But it is not in religious affairs only that men have every where ſhewed themſelves to be the ſame: the ſame reſemblance is to be found among them when ſome change in their habits and cuſtoms has been in agitation. The Mantchoux Tartars, who conquered the Chineſe, would have cut off their hair; but the latter broke their fetters, routed the terrible Mantchoux, and triumphed over their conquerors. The czar would ſhave the Ruſſians, and they revolted. The king of England would make the Highlanders wear breeches, and they roſe in arms. In the Eaſt and the Weſt the people are therefore every where the ſame, and every where the ſame cauſes have raiſed up and pulled down empires.

At the time of the conqueſt of China, what was the prince that occupied the throne? A weak wretch, an idol, whom they dared not inform of the bad ſtate of his affairs, and to whom incenſe was continually offered by his favourites, while he was ſolely ſurrounded by intriguing courtiers, without judgment, without knowledge, and without courage. Who commanded

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over the empires of the East and West, when Rome and Conſtantinople were taken and plundered by Alaric and Mahomet the ſecond? Princes of the ſame ſort. Such perhaps was the ſtate of France in the old age of Lewis XIV. when it was beaten on every ſide.

It appears that men are every where the ſame from the degeneracy and ignorance into which every people ſucceſſively fall, according to the intereſt their government has to degrade them. If a miniſter be weak, and fear that the people will open their eyes, and diſcover his incapacity, he keeps them faſt cloſed, and the ſtupidity of the people is then not the effect of a phyſical, but a moral cauſe.

Does not a cauſe of the ſame kind animate with the ſame ſpirit thoſe whom chance has brought up to the ſame employments? What is in Spain, Germany, and even in England the firſt care of the man in place? To enrich himſelf. The public welfare holds the ſecond place only.

If in the inferior offices of government almoſt all men have the ſame ſupercilious behaviour, and the ſame incapacity for adminiſtration; to what is it to be attributed? To a defect in their organiſation? No: but to that of their inſtruction. All men practiſed in the fineſſe of chicanery, and accuſtomed to judge only by precedent, remount with difficulty to the firſt principles of laws; they extend the memory, and contract the judgment.

In the mind, as in the body, thoſe parts only are ſtrong that are exerciſed: the legs of chairmen and the arms of labourers make this evident. If the muſcles of reaſon in the men of the law are commonly weak, it is becauſe they have little exerciſe.

Facts without number prove that men are every where eſſentially the ſame; that the difference of climate has no ſenſible influence over their minds, and even very little over their taſtes. The Illinois and the Icelander ſits by his keg of brandy till he has drank it out. In almoſt every country the women have the ſame deſire to pleaſe as in France, the ſame taſte for dreſs, the ſame care of their beauty, the ſame averſion to the country, and the ſame love for the capital, where, conſtantly ſurrounded by a number of admirers, they find themſelves really of more importance.

When we caſt our eyes over the univerſe, and perceive the ſame ambition in all hearts, the ſame credulity in all minds,

minds, the ſame duplicity in all prieſts, the ſame coquetry in all women, and the ſame love of riches in all ranks of people, how can we doubt but that men all reſembling each other, differ only in the diverſity of their inſtruction: that in every country their organs are nearly the ſame, and that they make nearly the ſame uſe of them; and that in ſhort the hands of the Indians and Chineſe are, for that reaſon, equally adroit in the fabric of ſtuffs as thoſe of the Europeans. Nothing proves therefore what is inceſſantly repeated, that it is to the difference of latitudes we ought to attribute the inequality of minds.

38. (p. 222) The frauds of the prieſts are every where the ſame: they are every where anxious to appropriate the wealth of the laics. The Romiſh church for this ſells a licence for relations to marry: it engages for ſo many maſſes, that is for ſo many ſix-penny pieces, to deliver every year ſo many ſouls out of purgatory, and conſequently to remit them ſo many ſins. At the Pagoda of Tinagogo, as at Rome, the prieſts for the ſame ſums ſell nearly the ſame hopes.

"At Tinagogo, (ſays the author of l'Hiſtoire general des "Voyages, tom. ix. p. 462.) on the third day after a ſacrifice "that is made to the new moon in December, they place in ſix "long and handſome ſtreets an infinity of balances ſuſpended by "braſs rods; there each devotée, to obtain the remiſſion of "his ſins, gets into one of the ſcales of a balance, and, accord- "ing to the different nature of his crimes, puts into the other "ſcale different ſorts of proviſions or monies as a counterpoiſe. "If his conſcience reproach him with gluttony and violation "of a faſt, the counterpoiſe conſiſts of honey, ſugar, eggs, and "butter. If he has been guilty of ſenſual pleaſures, he weighs "himſelf againſt cotton, feathers, cloth, perfumes, and wine. "Has he been uncharitable? He weighs himſelf againſt pieces "of money. Is he idle? The counterpoiſe is wood, rice, coal, "cattle, and fruits. Is he, laſtly, proud? He weighs himſelf "againſt dry fiſh, brooms, cow-dung, &c. Now all that ſerves "for counterpoiſe to the ſinners belongs to the prieſts. All "theſe ſorts of donations form large piles. Even the poor, "who have nothing to give, are not exempt from theſe alms. "They offer their hair: more than a hundred prieſts ſit with "ſciſſars in their hands to cut it off. The hair is alſo formed into

"great

"great heaps: more than a thouſand prieſts, ranged in order, "form of it cords, braids, rings, bracelets, &c. which the de- "vout ſouls purchaſe, and carry away as precious gages of the "favour of heaven. To form an idea of the ſum to which the "alms to the pagoda of Tinagogo only may amount, it will "ſuffice, ſays Pinto, the author of this relation, to mention that "the ambaſſador having aſked the prieſts at what ſum they "eſtimated thoſe alms, they anſwered without heſitation, that "only for the hair of the poor they got every year more than a "hundred thouſand pardins, that is, ninety thouſand ducats of "Portugal."

39. (p. 222.) Some philoſophers have defined man to be *a monkey that laughs*; others, *a rational animal*; and others, *a credulous animal*. This animal, they add, is mounted on two legs, has flexible fingers, and dextrous hands: he has many wants, and conſequently great induſtry. He is moreover as vain and proud as credulous. He thinks that the whole ſyſtem of nature was made for the earth, and the earth made for him. Is not this definition or deſcription of man extremely juſt?

40. (p. 223.) Every one aſks, what is truth or evidence? The root of the word indicates the idea we ought to annex to it. *Evidence* is derived from *videre*, *video*, I ſee.

What is to me an evident propoſition? It is a fact, of whoſe exiſtence I can convince myſelf by the teſtimony of my ſenſes, that never deceive me when I interrogate them with the neceſſary precaution and attention.

What is an evident propoſition to the generality of mankind? It is, in like manner, a fact of which all may convince themſelves by the teſtimony of their ſenſes, and whoſe exiſtence they may moreover verify every inſtant. Such are theſe two facts, *two and two make four*; *the whole is greater than a part*.

If I pretend, for example, that there is in the north ſea a polypus named kraken, and that this polypus is as large as a ſmall iſland. This fact, though evident to me, if I have ſeen and examined it with all the attention neceſſary to convince me of its reality, is not even probable to him that has not ſeen it; it is more rational in him to doubt my veracity, than to believe the exiſtence of ſo extraordinary an animal.

But if after travellers I deſcribe the true form of the buildings in Pekin, this deſcription, evident to thoſe who inhabit them, is only more or leſs probable to others; ſo that the true

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is not always evident, and the probable is often true. But in what does evidence differ from probability? I have already said, "Evidence is a fact that is subject to our senses, and "whose existence all men may verify every instant. As to "probability, it is founded on conjectures, on the testimony of "men, and on a hundred proofs of the same kind. Evidence "is a single point: there are no degrees of evidence. On the "contrary, there are various degrees of probability according "to the difference, 1. of the people who assert; 2. of the fact "asserted." Five men tell me they have seen a bear in the forests of Poland: this fact not being contradicted by any thing, is to me very probable. But if not five only, but five hundred men should assure me they met in the same forests ghosts, fairies, demons, their united evidence would not be to me at all probable; for in cases of this nature, it is more common to meet with five hundred romancers, than to see such prodigies.

42, (p. 223.) Let us place before our eyes all the facts from the comparison of which a new truth is to result; and let us annex clear ideas to the words that are used in its demonstration. Nothing can conceal it from our perception; and this truth presently reduced to a simple fact, will be conceived by every attentive man almost as soon as proposed. To what then can we attribute the small progress made in the sciences by a young man? To two causes:

The one is, the want of method in the instructors;

The other, the want of ardour and attention in the pupil.

42. (p. 225.) The perpetual metamorphoses of genius into science has often made me suspect that all things in nature, of themselves, prepare and lead to it. Perhaps the perfection of arts and sciences is less the work of genius than of time and necessity. The uniform progress of the sciences in all countries confirm this opinion. In fact, if in all nations, as Mr. Hume observes, *it is not till after having wrote well in verse, that they come to write well in prose*, so constant a progress of human reason appears to me the effect of a general secret cause: it at least supposes an equal aptitude to understanding in all men of all ages and countries.

43. (p. 228.) Since men converse and dispute with each other, they must feel themselves endowed with the faculty of perceiving

perceiving the ſame truths, and conſequently an equal aptitude to underſtanding. Without this conviction, what could be more abſurd than the diſputes of politicians and philoſophers? To what end ſhould they talk when they cannot underſtand each other? But ſince they do, it is evident that the obſcurity of a propoſition is never in the things, but in the words. So that on this ſubject one of the moſt illuſtrious Engliſh writers ſays, that if men were agreed about the ſignification of words, they would preſently perceive the ſame truths, and all adopt the ſame opinions. See Hume on Liberty and Neceſſity, Sect. 8.

This fact, proved by experience, gives the ſolution to a problem propoſed five or ſix years ſince by the Academy of Berlin, which was, *If the truths of metaphyſics in general, and the firſt principles of natural theology and morality, are ſuſceptible of the ſame evidence as the truths of geometry.* Annex a clear idea to the word *probity*, and regard it with me as *the practice of actions uſeful to our country.* What is then to be done to determine demonſtratively what actions are virtuous, and what vicious? Name thoſe that are uſeful or prejudicial to ſociety. Now in general nothing is more eaſy. It is therefore certain, if the public good be the object of morality, that its precepts being founded on principles as certain as thoſe of geometry, are like the propoſitions of that ſcience, ſuſceptible of the moſt rigorous demonſtration. It is the ſame of metaphyſics; which is a real ſcience, when diſtinguiſhed from that of the ſchools, it is kept within the bounds aſſigned it by the definition of the illuſtrious Bacon.

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SECTION III.

Of the general cauſes of the inequality of underſtandings.

CHAP. I.

What theſe cauſes are?

THEY are reducible to two.

The one is the different ſeries of events, circumſtances, and ſituations that attend different men; (ſeries to which I give the name of chance.)

The other is the deſire more or leſs earneſt that they have to inſtruct themſelves.

Chance is not favourable to all, in preciſely the ſame degree; and yet it has more ſhare than is imagined in the diſcoveries with which we honour genius. To know all the influence of chance let us conſult experience, which will teach us that in the arts it is to chance we owe almoſt all our diſcoveries.

In chemiſtry it is to the proceſs in the grand work that the adepts* owe moſt of their ſecrets; theſe ſecrets were not the objects of their ſearch;

* Some adepts have ſearched for the philoſopher's ſtone in Geneſis; the eccleſiaſtics alone have found it there.

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they ought not therefore to be regarded as the product of genius. If what I ſay of chemiſtry be applied to the different ſorts of ſciences, it will be found that in each of them chance has diſcovered all. Our memory is the chemiſt's crucible. It is from the mixture of certain matters thrown into a crucible, without deſign, that ſometimes reſult the moſt unexpected and aſtoniſhing effects; and it is in like manner from the mixture of certain facts, without deſign, in our memory, that ideas the moſt original and moſt ſublime reſult. All the ſciences are equally ſubject to the dominion of chance. Its influence is the ſame over all, but does not diſcover itſelf in a manner equally ſtriking.

CHAP. II.

Every new idea is the gift of chance.

A Truth that is entirely unknown cannot be the object of my meditation; it may be conſidered as diſcovered when I get a glimpſe of it. The firſt ſurmiſe is here the ſtroke of genius. But to what do I owe the firſt ſurmiſe? Is it to my underſtanding? No: it cannot employ itſelf in the ſearch of a truth, of whoſe exiſtence it it has not even a conception. This ſurmiſe is therefore the effect of a word, a lecture, a converſation,

ſation*, an accident; in ſhort, ſomething to which I give the name of chance. Now if we are indebted to chance for our firſt ſurmiſes, and conſequently for our diſcoveries, can we be aſſured that we do not alſo owe to it the means of extending and completing them?

The ſyren of Comus is the moſt proper ſubject to exemplify my ideas. If this ſyren was for a long time ſhewn at the fair†, without any one's gueſſing at its mechaniſm, it was becauſe chance did not place before the eyes of any one, the objects of compariſon from which the diſcovery muſt have proceeded. It was more favourable to Comus. But why is he not in France reckoned among men of great genius? Becauſe his mechaniſm is more curious than uſeful. If it were attended with a very extenſive advantage, no doubt but public gratitude would have placed Comus

* It is to the heat of converſation and diſpute that we frequently owe the moſt happy ideas. If thoſe ideas once eſcaped the memory, are no more repreſented, but loſt without recovery; it is becauſe we can ſcarce poſſibly find ourſelves twice in preciſely the ſame concourſe of circumſtances that gave them birth. Such ideas therefore ought to be regarded as the gifts of chance.

† *The fair St. Germains at Paris: it was likewiſe exhibited by Comus in London a few years ſince. The conſtruction of this machine may be ſeen in the third volume of my Rational Recreations. Whatever utility might have attended this performance, it would certainly never have entitled Comus to the appellation of a man of genius, as it is evidently taken from the Oithmatomantica Magnetica, deſcribed by Kircher in his ſecond book De Arti Magnet. printed at Cologn in* 1643.

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in the rank of the moſt illuſtrious men. He would have owed his diſcovery to chance, and the title of a man of genius to the importance of that diſcovery.

What follows from this inſtance?

1. That every new idea is a gift of chance.

2. If there be ſure methods of forming men of learning and men of underſtanding, there are none for forming men of genius, and inventors. But whether we regard genius as a gift of nature or chance, is it not in either caſe the effect of a cauſe independent of ourſelves? In this caſe, why regard as a matter of ſo much importance the greater or leſs perfection of education? The reaſon is plain. If genius depend on the greater or leſs perfection of the ſenſes, as inſtruction cannot change the natural faculties of man, give hearing to the deaf, or ſpeech to the dumb *, education is abſolutely uſeleſs. On the contrary, if genius be in part the gift of chance, men, after aſſuring themſelves by repeated obſervations of the means employed by chance in forming great talents, may, by making uſe of nearly the ſame means, produce nearly the ſame effects, and immenſely increaſe thoſe great talents.

Suppoſe, to produce a man of genius, chance ſhould be combined in him with the love of glo-

* *This is not univerſally true; many dumb perſons have been taught to ſpeak very intelligibly.*

ry.: ſuppoſe again, that a man be born under a government that, far from honouring, degrades talents; in this caſe it is evident that a man of genius muſt be entirely the work of chance.

In fact, this man muſt have either lived in the world, and owed his love of glory to the eſteem that was paid to talents by the particular ſociety with which he was connected *, or he muſt have lived in retreat, and owed the ſame love of glory to the ſtudy of hiſtory, and the remembrance of the honours anciently paid to virtue and talents; or laſtly, to an ignorance of the contempt his fellow-citizens have for each other.

Suppoſe, on the contrary, that this man be born in an age and under a form of government where merit is honoured: on this hypotheſis it is evident that his love for glory, and his genius, will not be the work of chance, but of the very conſtitution of the ſtate, and conſequently of his education, on which the form of governments has always the greateſt influence.

If we conſider underſtanding and genius as leſs the effects of organiſation than chance (1), it is certain, as I have already ſaid, that by obſerving the means made uſe of by chance in forming great men, we might, according to this obſervation, model a plan of education that would, by

* There are ſuch ſocieties among all nations, even the moſt ſtupid, if they be civilized.

encreaſing

increaſing their number in a nation, vaſtly retrench the power of this ſame chance, and diminiſh the immenſe ſhare it now has in our inſtruction.

Yet if it always to unforeſeen cauſes or incidents that we owe the firſt ſurmiſe, and conſequently the diſcovery of every new idea, chance, I agree, will ſtill conſtantly preſerve a certain influence over our minds: but this influence has alſo its bounds.

CHAP. III.

Of the limits to be ſet to the power of chance.

IF almoſt all objects, conſidered with attention, did not contain the ſeed of ſome diſcovery: if chance did not diſtribute its gifts in a manner nearly equal, and did not offer to all, objects of compariſon, from whence new and great ideas may ariſe, the underſtanding would be almoſt entirely the gift of chance.

It would be to our education that we owed our knowledge, and to chance that we owed our underſtanding, and each one would have more or leſs, according as chance had been more or leſs favourable to him. Now what does experience teach us concerning this matter? That the inequality of underſtandings is leſs the effect of the too unequal diſtribution of the gifts of chance,

than the indifference with which we receive them.

The inequality of underſtanding ought therefore to be regarded principally as the effect of the different degree of attention, exerted in obſerving the reſemblances and differences, the agreements and diſagreements between diverſe objects. Now this inequality of attention is in us the neceſſary produce of the unequal force of our paſſions.

There is no man animated with an ardent deſire of glory that does not always diſtinguiſh himſelf, more or leſs, in the art or ſcience he cultivates. It is true, that between two men equally deſirous of becoming illuſtrious, it is chance that by preſenting to one of them objects of compariſon from whence reſult the moſt fruitful ideas and the moſt important diſcoveries, determines his ſuperiority. Chance, by the influence it always has over the choice of objects that offer themſelves to us, will therefore always preſerve ſome influence over our underſtandings. When we confine its power within thoſe narrow limits, we do all that is poſſible. To what ever degree of perfection the ſcience of education may be carried, we muſt never expect to make men of genius of all the habitants of a nation; all it can do is to increaſe them, and to make the greateſt part of them men of knowledge and diſcernment, and this is all that is within its power. It is ſufficient to rouſe the attention of a people, and encourage

courage them to cultivate a ſcience whoſe perfection will procure in general ſo much happineſs to humanity, and in particular ſo many advantages to the nations by whom it is cultivated.

A people to whom the public education gave genius to a certain number of citizens, and diſcernment to almoſt all, would be without doubt the firſt people in the univerſe. The only and ſure method to produce this effect is early to habituate children to the fatigue of attention.

The ſeeds of diſcoveries preſented to us by chance will remain barren, if attention do not render them fruitful. The ſcarcity of attention is the cauſe of that of genius. But what muſt be done to force men to application? Inſpire them with the paſſions of emulation, glory, and the love of truth. It is the unequal force of thoſe paſſions that we ought to regard in man as the cauſe of the great inequality of their underſtandings.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ſecond cauſe of the inequality of underſtandings.

ALMOST all men are without paſſions, without love of glory (2): and far from exciting in them this deſire, moſt governments, by a mean and falſe policy (3) endeavour on the contrary to extinguiſh it; therefore, indifferent to glory, the people make little account of public eſteem, and little efforts to deſerve it.

I ſee among the greateſt part of mankind none but greedy men of commerce. If they fit out a ſhip, it is not with the hope to give their name to ſome new country. Solely ſenſible to the love of gain, all they fear is leſt their veſſel ſhould depart from the frequented tracts; now thoſe tracts lead not to diſcoveries. If the ſhip by chance, or a tempeſt, be carried to an unknown land, the pilot compelled to ſtop there, makes no inquiry either concerning the country or the habitants; he takes in water, ſets ſail, and hurries to another coaſt, to exchange his merchandize: returned at laſt to his own port, he unloads, fills the warehouſes of his owners with commodities, but brings back no diſcoveries.

There

There are but few ſuch men as Columbus*. They who now launch forth on the vaſt ocean are ſolely anxious for honours, employments, wealth, and power: few embark to make diſcoveries of new ſcience. How then can we wonder that ſuch diſcoveries are rare?

Truths are ſown by the hand of Heaven, here and there, in an obſcure and pathleſs foreſt; a road bounds that foreſt; it is frequented by an infinity of travellers, among whom are ſome curious men, whom even the thickneſs and obſcurity of the wood inſpires with a deſire to penetrate it. They enter, but embarraſſed by the trees, and torn by the briars, they are diſguſted with the entrance, abandon the enterprize, and regain the beaten path. Others, but their number is ſmall, animated, not by a vague curioſity, but an ardent and conſtant deſire of glory, pierce into the thickeſt part of the foreſt, paſs the dangerous bogs, nor ceaſe their courſe till chance preſents them with the diſcovery of ſome truth, more or leſs important. That diſcovery made, they turn their ſteps, and make a path from that truth to the high road, which every traveller then perceives as he paſſes by, becauſe all that have eyes may ſee

* *It would have been much for the honour of Spain, and much for the intereſt of humanity, if ſuch a man as Columbus had never exiſted. What did Spain get by his diſcovery? Wealth: and what did it loſe? Every title to juſtice and humanity; and entailed a horrid, deteſtable, indelible diſgrace on the name of Spaniard and Chriſtian.*

it; and nothing is wanting to the diſcovery but an earneſt deſire to ſearch it out, and the patience neceſſary to find it.

Does a man, anxious for a great name, ſet himſelf in the purſuit of an important truth? He ſhould arm himſelf with the patience of a hunter. It is the ſame with the philoſopher as with the Indian: the leaſt movement of the latter ſeparates him from his game, and the leaſt inattention of the former carries him away from the truth. Now nothing is more painful than to keep the body or the mind for a long time in the ſame immobility or attention: it is the conſequence of a ſtrong paſſion. In the Indian it is the neceſſity of eating, in the philoſopher the deſire of glory, that produces this effect.

But what is this deſire of glory? Even the deſire of pleaſure. So that in every country where glory ceaſes to be the repreſentative of pleaſure, the citizen is indifferent to glory, and the country is ſterile in men of genius and diſcoveries. There is no nation however that does not from time to time produce illuſtrious men; becauſe there is none where ſome individual is not to be found, who, ſtruck, as I have ſaid, with the eulogies laviſhed in hiſtory on talents, does not deſire to merit the ſame applauſe, and does not ſet himſelf for that purpoſe in ſearch of ſome new truth. If he obtain the object of his inquiry, and accompliſh his diſcovery, he is elated with the acquiſition,

and carries it about his country in triumph. But what is his ſurprize, when, from the indifference with which mankind receive it, he finds at length the little conſequence with which they regard it.

Then convinced, that in exchange for the labour and anxiety the ſearch of truth demands, he ſhall receive but little renown, and much perſecution, his courage fails; he becomes diſguſted, no longer purſues new diſcoveries, but delivers himſelf up to indolence, and ſtops ſhort in the midſt of his career.

Our attention is fugitive: ſtrong paſſions are neceſſary to keep it fixed. A man for amuſement will calculate a page of figures, but he will not calculate a volume, unleſs urged to it by the powerful motive of glory or wealth. Thoſe are the paſſions that put in action that equal aptitude men have to underſtanding: without them that aptitude is in us no more than a liſeleſs power.

What, once more, is the underſtanding or judgment? The knowledge of the true relations that a certain number of objects have to each other, and to ourſelves. To what do we owe this knowledge? To meditation and the compariſon of objects? But what does this compariſon ſuppoſe? An intereſt, more or leſs ardent, to compare them. The underſtanding is therefore in us the produce of that intereſt, and not of the greater or leſs perfection of the ſenſes.

But,

But, it will be ſaid, if the ſtrength of our conſtitution determines that of our deſires; if man owes his genius to his paſſions, and his paſſions to his temperament, on this ſuppoſition, genius will ſtill be in us the effect of organiſation, and conſequently the gift of nature.

It is to the diſcuſſion of this point that this important queſtion is now reduced: it is on the examination of this fact that its complete ſolution depends.

NOTES.

NOTES.

3. (page 258.) I Have known the ſtupidity and wickedneſs of theologians: every thing is to be feared from them. I am therefore forced to renew, from time to time, the ſame profeſſion of faith, and to repeat that I do not conſider chance as a being; that I do not make a God of it; and that by this word I only mean, *a ſeries of effects, of which we do not perceive the cauſes.* It is in this ſenſe that they ſay of chance, *it determines the dice*; yet all the world knows, that the manner of ſhaking the box and throwing the dice is the cauſe that 3 turns up and not 6.

2. (p. 262.) Let thoughtleſs men declaim inceſſantly againſt the paſſions. We learn however from experience that there is no great artiſt, nor great general, nor great miniſter, nor great poet or philoſopher without them. Philoſophy, as the etymology of the word proves, conſiſts in the love and ſearch after wiſdom. Now all love is a paſſion: it is therefore the paſſions that have ſupported in their labours, Newton, Locke, Bayle, &c. Their diſcoveries were the price of their meditations. Theſe diſcoveries ſuppoſe a lively, conſtant, aſſiduous purſuit of the truth, and that purſuit a paſſion.

He is not a philoſopher who, indifferent to truth or falſehood, delivers himſelf up to that apathy, to that pretended philoſophical repoſe, which holds the mind in a ſtate of inſenſibility, and retards its progreſs toward the truth. That this ſtate is eaſy, free from envy and the fury of bigots, and conſequently that the ſlothful may call himſelf prudent, I allow, but not that he call himſelf a philoſopher. What company is moſt dangerous to youth? That of thoſe prudent and diſcreet men; and who are the more ſure to ſtifle in youth every kind of emulation, as they point out to him in ignorance a ſecurity from perſecution, and conſequently the happineſs of inaction.

Among the apoſtles of idleneſs there are ſometimes men of much underſtanding; but theſe are they who owe their indolence to the diſguſts and chagrin met with in their ſearch after truth. The greateſt part of the reſt are men of mediocrity, who

who would have all men be the ſame. It is envy that makes them preach up idleneſs.

What is to be done to eſcape the ſeduction of their reaſoning? Suſpect its ſincerity. Remember that an intereſt, either mean or noble, always makes men argue: that all ſuperiority of underſtanding is diſguſtful to him who diſdains glory, and wraps himſelf up in what is called a philoſophical indolence; and that ſuch a man has always an intereſt in ſtifling in the hearts of others an emulation that would give him too many ſuperiors.

3. (p. 262.) The aim of the greateſt part of deſpotic princes is to reign over ſlaves, and to change each man into an automaton. Theſe deſpots, ſeduced by the intereſt of the preſent moment, forget that the imbecillity of the ſubjects announces the fall of monarchs; that it is deſtructive to their empire, and in ſhort, that it is on the whole more eaſy to govern an enlightened people, than ſuch as are ſtupid.

SEC.

SECTION IV.

Men commonly well organiſed are all ſuſceptible of the ſame degree of paſſion: the inequality of their capacities is always the effect of the difference of ſituation in which chance has placed them. The original character of each man, (as Paſcal has obſerved), is nothing but the produce of his firſt habits.

CHAP. I.

Of the little influence organiſation and temperament have on the paſſions and characters of men.

AT the moment the child is delivered from the womb of its mother, and opens the gates of life, he enters it without ideas and without paſſions. The only want he feels is that of hunger. It is not therefore in the cradle that we receive the paſſions of pride, avarice, ambition, the deſire of eſteem and of glory. Thoſe factitious paſſions *, generated in the boſoms of towns and

*In Europe, to the number of factitious paſſions we may add jealouſy. Men are there jealous becauſe they are vain. Vanity makes a part of almoſt all the principal European amours: it is not ſo in Aſia; jealouſy is there the mere effect of corporeal pleaſures. It is known by experience, that the more the deſires of the ſultanas are reſtrained, the more ardent they become,

cities, ſuppoſe conventions and laws already eſtabliſhed among men, and conſequently their union in ſociety. Such paſſions would be therefore unknown to him that was borne by a tempeſt at the moment of his birth to a deſert coaſt, and like Romulus nouriſhed by a wolf; and to him whom ſome fairy ſtole in the night from his cradle, and placed in one of thoſe ſolitary enchanted caſtles where formerly dwelt ſo many knights and princeſſes. Now if we are born without paſſions, we are alſo born without character. The love of glory produced in us, is an acquiſition, and conſequently the effect of inſtruction. But does not nature endow us, in the moſt early infancy, with the ſort of organiſation proper to form in us ſuch or ſuch a character? On what is this conjecture founded? Has it been remarked that a certain diſpoſition in the nerves, the fluids, or muſcles, conſtantly produces the ſame manner of thinking; that nature retrenches certain fibres of the brain from one, to give them to another; and conſequently always inſpires the latter with a lively deſire of glory? On the ſuppoſition that characters are the effect of organiſation, what can education do? Can the moral change the corporeal diſpoſition? Can the moſt juſt maxim give

come, and the more pleaſure they give and receive, jealouſy, daughter of the luxury of ſultans and viſirs, makes them build ſeraglios, and confine their women.

hearing

hearing to the dumb? Can the moſt ſagacious leſſons of a preceptor level the back of him that is crooked, or ſtraighten the leg of the cripple, or encreaſe the ſtature of a pigmy? What nature has done, ſhe alone can undo. The only ſentiment that is engraved in our hearts in infancy is the love of ourſelves: this love, founded on corporeal ſenſibility, is common to all men; therefore however different their education may be, this ſentiment is always the ſame in them; ſo that in all countries, and at all times, men have loved, do love, and will love themſelves in preference to all others. If a man be variable in all other ſentiments, it is becauſe all others are the effects of moral cauſes. Now if theſe cauſes be variable, their effects muſt be ſo likewiſe. To eſtabliſh this by experience at large, I ſhall firſt conſult the hiſtory of nations.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the alterations that have happened in the characters of nations, and of the causes by which they were produced.

EACH nation has its particular manner of seeing and feeling, which forms its character: and in every nation its character either changes on a ſudden, or alters by degrees, according to the ſudden or inſenſible alterations in its government, and conſequently of its public education*.

That of the French, which has been for a long time regarded as gay, was not always ſo. The emperor Julian ſays of the Pariſians, "I "like them, because their character, like mine, is "auſtere and ſerious (1)."

The characters of nations therefore change: but at what period is the alteration moſt perceptible? At the moment of revolution, when a people paſs on a ſudden from liberty to ſlavery. Then from bold and haughty they become weak and puſillanimous: they dare not look on the man in office: they are inthralled, and it is of little conſequence by whom they are inthralled. This dejected people ſay, like the aſs in the fable,

* The form of government under which we live always makes a part of our education.

whoever

whoever be my maſter, I cannot carry a heavier load. As much as a free citizen is zealous for the glory of his nation, ſo much is a ſlave indifferent to the public welfare. His heart, deprived of activity and energy, is without virtue, without ſpirit, and without talents; the faculties of his ſoul are ſtupified; he becomes indifferent to the arts, commerce, agriculture, &c. It is not for ſervile hands, ſay the Engliſh, to till and fertiliſe the land. Simonides entered the empire of a deſpotic ſovereign, and found there no traces of men. A free people are courageous, open, humane, and loyal (2): A nation of ſlaves are baſe, perfidious, malicious, and barbarous: they puſh their cruelty to the greateſt exceſs. If the ſevere officer has all to fear from the reſentment of the injured ſoldier on the day of battle, that of ſedition is in like manner for the ſlave oppreſſed, the long expected day of vengeance; and he is the more enraged in proportion as fear has held his fury the longer reſtrained *.

What a ſtriking picture of a ſudden change in the character of a nation does the Roman hiſtory preſent us. What people, before the elevation of the Cæſars, ſhewed more force, more virtue, more love for liberty, and horror for ſlavery? And what people, when the throne of the Cæſars was

* The depoſition of Nabob Jaffier-Ali-Kan, related in the Leyden Gazette of the 23d of June, 1761, is a proof of this.

eſtabliſhed, ſhewed more weakneſs and depravity? (3) Their baſeneſs diſguſted Tiberius.

Indifferent to liberty, when Trajan offered it, they refuſed it: they diſdained that liberty their anceſtors had purchaſed with ſo much blood. All things were then changed in Rome; and that determined and grave character which diſtinguiſhed its firſt inhabitants, was ſucceeded by that light and frivolous diſpoſition with which Juvenal reproaches them in his tenth ſatire.

Let us exemplify this matter by a more recent change. Compare the Engliſh of the preſent day with thoſe under Henry VIII. Edward VI. Mary, and Elizabeth: this people now ſo humane, indulgent, learned, free, and induſtrious, ſuch lovers of the arts and of philoſophy, were then nothing more than a nation of ſlaves, inhuman and ſuperſtitious; without arts and without induſtry.

When a prince uſurps over his people a boundleſs authority, he is ſure to change their character, to enervate their ſouls; to render them timid and baſe (4). From that moment, indifferent to glory, his ſubjects loſe that character of boldneſs and conſtancy proper to ſupport all labours and brave all dangers: the weight of arbitrary power deſtroys the ſpring of their emulation.

Does a prince, impatient of contradiction (5), give the name of factious to the man of veracity? He ſubſtitutes in his nation the character of falſity for

for that of frankneſs. If in thoſe critical moments the prince, giving himſelf up to flatterers, find that he is ſurrounded by men void of all merit, whom ſhould he blame? Himſelf: for it is he that has made them ſuch.

Who could believe, when he conſiders the evils of ſervitude, that there were ſtill princes mean enough to wiſh to reign over ſlaves; and ſtupid enough to be ignorant of the fatal changes that deſpotiſm produces in the character of their ſubjects?

What is arbitrary power? The ſeed of calamities, that ſown in the boſom of a ſtate ſprings up to bear the fruit of miſery and devaſtation. Let us hear the king of Pruſſia: *Nothing is better*, ſaid he, in a diſcourſe pronounced to the academy of Berlin, *than an arbitrary government, under princes juſt, humane, and virtuous: nothing worſe, under the common race of kings.* Now how many kings are there of the latter ſort! and how many ſuch as Titus, Trajan, and Antoninus? Theſe are the thoughts of a great man. What elevation of mind, what knowledge does not ſuch a declaration ſuppoſe in a monarch? What in fact does a deſpotic power announce? Often ruin to the deſpot, and always to his poſterity (6). The founder of ſuch a power, ſets his kingdom on a ſandy foundation. It is only a tranſient, ill-judged notion of royalty, that is, of pride, idleneſs, or ſome ſimilar paſſion, which prefers

the exercise of an unjust and cruel despotism over wretched slaves, to that of a legitimate and friendly power (7), over a free and happy people. Arbitrary power is a thoughtless child, who continually sacrifices the future to the present.

The most redoubtable enemy of the public welfare, is not riot or sedition, but despotism (8): it changes the character of a nation, and always for the worse: it produces nothing but vices. Whatever might be the power of an Indian sultan, he could never form magnanimous subjects; he would never find among his slaves the virtues of free men. Chymistry can extract no more gold from a mixed body than it includes; and the most arbitrary power can draw nothing from a slave but the baseness he contains.

Experience then proves that the character and spirit of a people change with the form of government; and that a different government gives by turns, to the same nation, a character noble or base, firm or fickle, courageous or cowardly. Men therefore are endowed at their birth, either with no disposition, or with dispositions to all vices and all virtues; they are therefore nothing more than the produce of their education. If the Persian have no idea of liberty, and the savage no idea of servitude, it is the effect of their different instruction.

Why, say strangers, do we no perceive at once, in all the French, the same spirit, and the same character,

racter, like the ſame phyſiognomy in all Negroes? Becauſe the French do not judge or think for themſelves (9), but after the people in power. Their manner of judging for this reaſon muſt be ſufficiently uniform. It is with Frenchmen as with their wives: when they paint themſelves, and go to a public ſhow, they all ſeem of the ſame complexion. I know that with attention we can always diſcover between the characters and underſtandings of individuals; but to do this requires time.

The ignorance of the French, the iniquity of their police, and the influence of their clergy, render them in general more like each other than men of other countries. Now if ſuch be the influence of the form of government on the manners and character of a people, what alteration in the ideas and characters of individuals ought not to be produced by the alterations that happen in their fortune and ſituation!

CHAP. III.

Of the alterations that happen in the characters of individuals.

THAT which occurs in a great and ſtriking manner in nations, occurs in little, and in a manner leſs ſenſible, in individuals. Almoſt every change in their ſituation produces one in their characters*. A man is ſevere, peeviſh, imperious; menaces and torments his ſlaves, his children and domeſtics. He loſes himſelf by chance in a foreſt, and when night comes on, retires to a cavern, where he perceives a lion is couching. Does this man preſerve his moroſe and quarrelſome temper? No: he creeps with the utmoſt caution into a corner of the den, leſt by the ſmalleſt noiſe he ſhould rouſe the fury of the beaſt.

From the den of the natural lion let us tranſport him to the cavern of a moral lion: let us place him in the ſervice of a cruel and deſpotic tyrant: mild and moderate in the preſence of his maſter, perhaps this man will become the moſt

* *Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes,*
Tenets with books, and principles with times.
Aſk mens opinions: Scoto now ſhall tell
How trade increaſes, and the world goes well;
Strike off his penſion, by the ſetting ſun,
And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

POPE.

mean

mean and cringing of all his ſlaves. But it will be ſaid, his character is conſtrained, not altered: it is a tree that is bent by force, and whoſe natural elaſticity will ſoon reſtore it to its former figure. But can it be imagined, that after a tree has been for ſome years bent into a particular figure, it will ever return to its original form? Whoever ſays that men do not eaſily change their characters by conſtraint, only ſays that habits long eſtabliſhed are not to be deſtroyed in an inſtant.

The man of ill humour preſerves his character, becauſe he has always ſome inferior on whom he can exerciſe his ill nature. But let him be kept a long time in the preſence of a lion or a tyrant, and there is no doubt but a continued reſtraint, transformed into a habit, will ſoften his character. In general, as long as we are young enough to contract new habits, the ſole incurable faults, and vices, are thoſe we cannot correct without employing means of which morals, laws, or cuſtoms do not allow the practice. There is nothing impoſſible to education: it makes the bear dance.

If we reflect on this ſubject, we perceive that our firſt nature, as Paſcal and experience prove, is nothing elſe than our firſt habit *.

* If the author of Emilius has denied this maxim, it is becauſe he did not rightly comprehend the ſenſe of Paſcal.

Man is born without ideas and without paſſions, but he is born an imitator and docile to example; conſequently it is to inſtruction he owes his habits and his character. Now I aſk, why habits contracted during a certain time, cannot at length be effaced by contrary habits. How many people do we ſee change their character with their rank, according to the different place they occupy at court, and in the miniſtry; in ſhort, according to the change that happens in their ſituation. Why does the robber, when tranſported from England to America, frequently become honeſt? Becauſe he becomes a man of property, and has land to cultivate; in ſhort, becauſe his ſituation is changed.

The officer in the camp is void of compaſſion; accuſtomed to the ſight of blood, he beholds it unmoved. But when he returns to London, Paris, or Berlin, he returns to the feelings of humanity. Why ſhould we regard each character as the effect of a particular organiſation, when we cannot determine what that organiſation is? Why ſearch in occult qualities for the cauſe of a moral phenomenon, which the developement of the paſſion of ſelf-love ſo clearly and readily explains?

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of self-love.

MAN is sensible of bodily pleasure and pain, consequently he flies from the one, and pursues the other; and it is to this constant pursuit and flight that is given the name of self-love.

This sentiment, the immediate effect of corporeal sensibility, and consequently common to all, is inseparable from man. As a proof I offer its permanence, impossibility of destruction, or even alteration. Of all our sentiments it is the only one that has these properties: it is to this we owe all our desires, and all our passions; which are nothing more in us than the application of self-love to particular objects*.

It is therefore to this sentiment, diversly modified according to the education we receive, the government under which we live, and the different situations in which we are placed, that we are to

* *Modes of self-love the passions we may call;*
'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all:
But since not ev'ry good we can divide,
And reason bids us for our own provide;
Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
List under reason, and deserve her care.
POPE.

attribute the amaſing difference in the paſſions and characters of men.

Self-love makes us totally what we are. Why are we ſo covetous of honours and dignities? Becauſe we love ourſelves, and deſire our own happineſs, and conſequently the power of procuring it. The love of power, and the means of procuring it, is therefore neceſſarily connected in man with the love of himſelf (10). Every one would command, becauſe every one would increaſe his felicity, and engage all his fellow-citizens to promote it. Now among all the methods to engage them, the moſt certain is power or force. The love of power, founded on that of happineſs, is therefore the common object of all our deſires (11). Thus riches, honour, glory, envy, importance, juſtice, virtue, intolerance, in a word, all the factitious paſſions* are in us nothing but the love of power, diſguiſed under thoſe different names.

Power is the only object of man's purſuit. To prove this, I ſhall ſhew that all the paſſions above recited are in us properly nothing more than the love of power; and I conclude from this love being common to all, that all are ſuſceptible of the deſire of eſteem and glory, and conſequently of the ſort of paſſion proper to put in action the equal

* All our paſſions are factitious, except corporeal wants, pains, and pleaſures

aptitude

aptitude that men, organiſed in the common manner, have to underſtanding.

CHAP. V.

Of the love of riches and glory.

AT the head of the cardinal virtues are placed force or power; it is the virtue moſt, and perhaps the only one really, eſteemed. The portion of weakneſs is contempt.

From whence ariſes our diſdain of the Oriental nations, ſome of whom are equal to us in induſtry, as is apparent from the fabric of their ſtuffs; and ſeveral of whom ſurpaſs us perhaps in the ſocial virtues? Do we deſpiſe them merely for the meanneſs with which they bear the cruel and ſhameful yoke of tyrannical power? Such a contempt would be juſt: but no; we deſpiſe them as enervate and not practiſed in arms. It is therefore force that we reſpect (12), and weakneſs that we deſpiſe. The love of power however is common to all *; all deſire it; but all do not, like Cæſar and Cromwell, aſpire to ſupreme power: few men can conceive the deſign, and ſtill fewer are able to execute it.

* The man without deſire, who thinks himſelf perfectly happy, muſt be, without doubt, inſenſible to the love of power. Are there men of this ſort? Yes: but their number is too ſmall to deſerve regard.

The

The ſort of power generally deſired is that eaſily attained. Every one may become rich, and every one deſires wealth: for by that we can gratify all our appetites, ſuccour the afflicted, and oblige, conſequently command, a boundleſs number of individuals *.

Glory, like riches, procures power; and we in like manner purſue it. Glory is acquired either by arms or eloquence. We know in what eſteem eloquence was held at Rome and in Greece; it there conducted men to grandeur and power. *Magna vis & magnum nomen*, ſays Cicero, *ſunt unum et idem*. Among thoſe people a great name gave great power. The renowned orator commanded a number of clients. Now in every republic, whoever is followed by a croud of clients is always a powerful citizen. The Hercules of the Gauls, from whoſe mouth there iſſued an infinity of gold threads, was the emblem of the moral force of eloquence. But why is that eloquence, formerly ſo reſpected, no longer honoured and cultivated, except in England? Becauſe it is no where elſe the road to honours.

* *What nature wants, commodious gold beſtows,*
'Tis thus we eat the bread another ſows.
Uſeful, I grant, it ſerves what life requires,
But dreadful too, the dark aſſaſſin hires:
Trade it may help, ſociety extend;
But lures the pirate, and corrupts the friend.
It raiſes armies in a nation's aid;
But bribes a ſenate, and the land's betray'd.
POPE.

The

The love of glory, of eſteem, and importance is therefore properly nothing more than a diſguiſed love of power.

Glory, they ſay, is the miſtreſs of almoſt all great men: they purſue her through all dangers; to obtain her they brave the labours of war, the fatigue of ſtudy, and the reſentment of a thouſand rivals (13). That is, in countries where glory gives power; where it is nothing more than an empty title, where merit has no real importance, the citizen, indifferent about public fame, will make few efforts to obtain it. Why is glory regarded as a plant of a republican ſoil, that degenerating in a deſpotic country, never thrives with remarkable vigour? Becauſe in glory we in reality ſeek nothing but power, and under an arbitrary government all power vaniſhes before that of the deſpot. The man who there paſſes the night under arms, or in his ſtudy, thinks that he is animated by a deſire of public eſteem: but he deceives himſelf. Eſteem is only the name he gives to the object of his purſuit; power is the thing itſelf.

From hence I obſerve, that the ſplendor and power with which glory is ſometimes ſurrounded, and that renders it ſo dear to us, muſt alſo frequently render us odious to our fellow-citizens, and from hence proceeds envy.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of envy.

MERIT, ſays Pope, produces envy, as the body produces the ſhadow. Envy infers merit as ſmoke does fire. Envy, exaſperated by merit, reſpects no place or dignity, not even the throne: it equally purſues a Voltaire, a Catinat, and a Frederic. If we were frequently to recollect how far its fury extends, perhaps, terrified by the perſecutions that attend the ſteps of a man of great talents, we ſhould not have courage to acquire them.

The man of genius who ſays to himſelf, while ſeated by his lamp, this night my work will be finiſhed: to-morrow is the day of recompence: to-morrow the grateful public ſhall acknowledge the obligation it owes me: to-morrow I ſhall obtain the crown of immortality. This man forgets the power of envy. To-morrow arrives: the work is publiſhed: it is a finiſhed work: the public however does not acknowledge its obligation. Envy drives far from the author the ſweet perfume of eulogy *, and in its ſtead ſubſtitutes the

* Of all the paſſions envy is the moſt deteſtable; the portrait drawn of it, by I know not what poet, is horrible.

Compaſſion, ſays he, is ſoftened by the misfortunes of men; envy rejoices in their tortures.

There

ſtench of a malignant criticiſm and injurious calumny. The ſun of glory ſcarce ever ſhines but on the tomb of a great man. He that deſerves eſteem ſeldom enjoys it; and he that plants the laurel rarely repoſes under its ſhadow *.

But does envy dwell in every heart? There is none that is not at leaſt penetrated by it. How many great men are there that cannot ſuffer competitors, that will not admit a partition of eſteem with any of their brethren; and forget, that at the banquet of glory, every one ſhould have, if I may ſo ſay, his portion?

Even the moſt noble ſouls ſometimes lend an ear to envy; they reſiſt its aſperſions, but not without difficulty. Nature has made man envious: to deſire an alteration in this reſpect, is to deſire he would ceaſe to love himſelf, that is, to deſire an impoſſibility. Let not the legiſlature therefore

There is no paſſion that does not propoſe ſome pleaſure for its object; the ſole object of envy is the miſeries of others.

Merit contemns the proſperity of the wicked and the ſtupid; envy, that of the good and learned.

Love and wrath, lighted in the heart, there burn for an hour, a day, a year; envy gnaws it to the laſt moment of exiſtence.

Under the banner of envy march hatred, calumny, cabal, and treachery.

Envy is every where attended by meagre famine; the venom of peſtilence, and the devaſtation of war.

* If great writers become the preceptors of mankind after their death, it muſt be confeſſed, that while they live, the preceptors are ſufficiently chaſtiſed by their pupils.

attempt

attempt to ſilence jealouſy, but to render its rage impotent, and eſtabliſh, as in England, laws proper to protect merit againſt the reſentment of a miniſter, and the fanaticiſm of a prieſt. This is all that ſagacity can do in favour of talents. To pretend to more, and flatter ourſelves with annihilating envy, is folly. All ages have declaimed againſt this vice; what have their declamations produced? Nothing. Envy ſtill exiſts, and has loſt nothing of its force, becauſe nothing can change the nature of man.

There is a time however when envy is not felt; and that time is in early youth. Do we propoſe to ſurpaſs, or at leaſt to equal the merit of men already honoured with public applauſe; do we aſpire to a participation of the applauſe that is decreed them? Then, full of reſpect, their preſence excites our emulation; we extol them with tranſport; becauſe we have an intereſt in praiſing them, in habituating the public to reſpect in them our future talents. Praiſe is therefore a tribute that youth freely pays to merit, and that is conſtantly refuſed it by maturer age.

At thirty years the emulation of twenty is changed into envy. When we loſe the hope of equalling thoſe we admire, admiration gives place to hatred. The reſource of pride is the contempt of talents. The deſire of the man of mediocrity is to have no ſuperiors. How many envious men repeat ſoftly after a comic writer,

Je

Je t'aime d'autant plus que je l'eſteme moins.

The leſs I eſteem thee I love thee the more.

If we cannot ſtifle the reputation of a celebrated man, we at leaſt expect from him the moſt ſubmiſſive modeſty. The envious have reproached M. Diderot even with the firſt words of his Interpretation of Nature: *Young man, take this and read.* They were not formerly ſo difficult: the counſellor Dumoulin ſaid of himſelf; *I that have no equal, and am ſuperior to all the world.* The many humiliating circumſtances now required of authors ſuppoſes a remarkable increaſe of pride in readers; ſuch a pride declares a hatred of merit; and that hatred is natural. In fact, if anxious for happineſs men court power, and conſequently the glory and importance it procures, they muſt deteſt what in a man too illuſtrious deprives them of it. Why do they circulate ſo many bad reports of men of genius? Becauſe they find themſelves inwardly conſtrained to think well of them. When they draw for a twelfth-cake, there is a part ſet aſide for God; and when they examine the merit of a man of eminence, they always find ſome defect: that is the portion of envy.

When a man cannot raiſe himſelf above the rank of his fellow-citizens, he endeavours to bring them down to him. He who cannot be their ſuperior, would at leaſt be their e-

qual * (14). Such is man, and such he always will be.

Among virtuous characters, and the moſt above groſs envy, perhaps there is no one not ſtained with a ſlight blemiſh of it. Who in fact can boaſt of having always heartily commended genius? With having never diſſembled his eſteem? With having never held a culpable ſilence, and with praiſes given to talents not having added one of thoſe perfidious *buts*, that jealouſy ſo frequently forces from us †.

Every great talent is in general an object of hatred, and from hence that eagerneſs with which we purchaſe thoſe pamphlets that laſh them ſo furiouſly. Why elſe do we read them? It cannot be a deſire to improve our taſte (15); for thoſe writers do not pretend to the abilities of a Longinus or Deſpreaux; not even to enlighten the public: Let him who cannot compoſe a good work never

* *I have no title to aſpire,*
Yet when you ſink I ſeem the higher:
In Pope I cannot read a line,
But with a ſigh I wiſh it mine;
When he can in one couplet fix
More ſenſe than I can do in ſix,
It gives me ſuch a jealous fit,
I cry, pox take him and his wit!

Swift.

† How many men extol the ancients above the moderns, merely that they may not be forced to acknowledge they have among themſelves ſuch men as Locke, Seneca, Virgil, &c.

pretend

pretend to amuſe himſelf with criticiſing thoſe of others.

The impotency of producing any thing good makes a critic; his profeſſion is humble. If ſuch writers as Desfontaine pleaſe, it is as conſolators of the ſtupid *. The bitterneſs of ſatire is the proof of genius.

To blame with rancour is the praiſe of envy. It is the firſt eulogy an author receives, and the only one he can draw from his rivals. Men applaud with regret: it is themſelves only they would find praiſe worthy. There is ſcarce any man who cannot perſuade himſelf of his own merit: has he common ſenſe? he prefers it to genius: has he ſome diminutive virtues? he gives them the preference to great talents. We deſpiſe all that is not ſelf. There is but one man who can believe himſelf free from envy; and it is he that has never examined his own heart.

The protectors and panegyriſts of genius are youth (16); and ſome few learned and virtuous men. But their impotent protection (17) can give a writer neither credit nor conſideration. Yet, what is the common nouriſhments of talents and virtue? Conſideration and eulogy. Deprived of this ſubſiſtence, they both languiſh and die:

* Racine and Pradon, each wrote a Phedra. The Desfontains of the age roſe againſt Racine, and their criticiſms were applauded: they diſcharged the fots, for ſome time, from the inſupportable burden of eſteem.

the activity and energy of the ſoul is extinguiſhed; as the flame goes out that has nothing to nouriſh it.

In almoſt all governments, talents, like the priſoners of the Romans, condemned and given up to wild beaſts, become their prey. Is genius deſpiſed at court? Envy does the reſt, (18) it deſtroys the very ſeed of genius. When merit is continually obliged to ſtrive with envy, it becomes fatigued, and quits the ground, if there be no prize ordained for the conqueror. We love neither ſtudy nor glory for themſelves; but for the pleaſures, eſteem, and power they procure. Why? Becauſe in general, we are leſs deſirous of being eſtimable than eſteemed. Moſt writers, anxious only for the glory of the preſent moment (19), and to flatter the taſte of their age and nation (20), preſent them with nothing but ideas adapted to the preſent day, and ſuch as are agreeable to men in power, from whom they can expect money and conſideration, together with an ephemeral ſucceſs.

There are men, however, who diſdain the glory of a moment; who, tranſporting their imaginations into futurity, and enjoying in advance the eulogies and reſpect of poſterity, fear to ſurvive their reputation (21). This motive alone makes them ſacrifice the glory and conſideration of the preſent moment, to the hope of, ſometimes a diſtant, but greater glory and importance. Theſe men

men are rare: they deſire the approbation of none but worthy citizens.

What were the cenſures of the Sorbonne to Marmontel (22)? He would have bluſhed at their applauſe. A garland wove by ſtupidity, cannot ſit eaſy on the head of a genius. It is like the new ornament with which they have in Languedoc crowned the ſquare houſe. The traveller, as he paſſes, ſays, "Behold the hat of Harlequin on "the head of Cæſar."

Let it not be imagined, however, that the man moſt ſolicitous for a durable reputation, loves glory and truth themſelves. If ſuch be the nature of each individual, that he is neceſſitated to love himſelf before all things, the love of truth muſt be in him always ſubordinate to the love of his happineſs. He can only love in the truth the means of increaſing his own felicity. Therefore he will purſue neither glory nor truth in a country and under a government where they are both deſpiſed.

The reſult of this and the preceding chapter, is, that the fury of envy, the deſire of riches and talents, the love of importance, glory, and truth, are never in man any thing elſe than the love of power (23), diſguiſed under thoſe different denominations.

CHAP. VII.

Of justice.

JUSTICE is the conſervator of the life and liberty of the citizens. Each one deſires to enjoy his ſeveral properties; each one therefore loves juſtice in others, and would have them behave juſtly toward him. But who is ſolicitous to be juſt toward others? Do men love juſtice for the ſake of juſtice, or for the conſideration it procures? That is the object of my inquiry.

Man is ſo often ignorant of himſelf: we perceive ſo much contradiction between his conduct and his diſcourſe *, that to know him we muſt ſtudy his actions and his nature itſelf.

* In morality, as in religion, there are a few ſincere, and a great many hypocrites. A thouſand men adorn themſelves with ſentiments not their own, and that they cannot have. When we compare their conduct with their diſcourſe, we find none but knaves that would make dupes. We ought in general to miſtruſt the probity of thoſe who pretend to extraordinary probity, and ſet themſelves up for ancient Romans. There are who appear really virtuous at the moment the curtain is drawn up, and they are going to perform a great part on the theatre of the world. But behind the ſcenes how many are there who preſerve the ſame character of equity, and are always juſt?

What convinces me of the love the ancient Romans had for virtue, is the knowledge of their laws, and their manners; without this knowledge, the virtue of the modern Romans would

CHAP. VIII.

Of juſtice conſidered in the man of nature.

TO judge of man, let us conſider him in his primitive ſtate, in that of a ferocious ſavage. Does the ſavage love and reſpect equity? No: it is force he regards. He has no idea of equity in his heart, nor any word to expreſs it in his language. What idea can he form of it, and what in fact is injuſtice? The violation of a convention or law made from the advantage of the majority. Injuſtice, therefore, cannot precede the eſtabliſhment of a convention, a law, and a common intereſt. Before law, there is no injuſtice. *Si non eſſet lex, non eſſet peccatum.* Now what does the eſtabliſhment of laws ſuppoſe?

1ſt. The union of men in a ſociety, greater or leſs.

2d. The formation of a language proper to communicate a certain number of ideas *.

would make me ſuſpect that of the ancient, and I ſhould ſay with Cardinal Beſſarion, on the ſubject of miracles, *that the new make the old doubtful.*

The man juſt, but intelligent, will not pretend to love juſtice for itſelf. Is he without fault? We allow without bluſhing, that in all our actions we never have any thing but our happineſs in view; but we always confound it with that of our fellow-citizens. Few place it ſo happily.

* According to Mr. Locke, "A law is a rule preſcribed to "the people, with the ſanction of ſome puniſhment or reward,

Now if there be ſavages whoſe language does not contain above five or ſix ſounds or cries, the formation of a language muſt be the work of ſeveral centuries. Until that work be completed, men without convention and laws, muſt live in a ſtate of war.

This eſtate, they will ſay, is a ſtate of miſery; and miſery being the creator of laws, muſt force men to accept them. Yes; but till this acceptation, men are not the leſs unjuſt for being miſerable. How can they be ſaid to uſurp the field or orchard of the preſent poſſeſſor, and commit a robbery, when there is no property or partition of fields or orchards? Before the public intereſt has declared the law of firſt poſſeſſion to be held

" proper to determine their wills. All law, according to him, " ſuppoſe reward or puniſhment attached to its obſervation or " infraction."

This definition laid down, the man who violates, among a poliſhed people, a convention not attended with this ſanction, is not puniſhable: he is however unjuſt. But could he be unjuſt before the eſtabliſhment of all convention, and the formation of a language proper to expreſs injuſtice? No: for in that ſtate, man can have no idea of property, nor conſequently of juſtice.

What does experience teach us about this matter? Experience, to which, in morality as well as in phyſics, we muſt ſubmit the moſt plauſible theories, and which alone can eſtabliſh their truth or falſity; experience tells us, that man has ideas of force before thoſe of juſtice; that, in general, he has no love for juſtice; that even in poliſhed nations, where they are continually talking of equity, no one regards it, unleſs he be forced by the fear of a power equal or ſuperior to his own.

ſacred,

ſacred, what can be the plea of a ſavage inhabitant of a woody diſtrict, from which a ſtronger ſavage had driven him out?

What right have you, he would ſay, to drive me from my poſſeſſion?

What right have you, ſays the other, to that poſſeſſion?

Chance, replies the firſt, led my ſteps thither: it belongs to me becauſe I inhabit it, and land belongs to the firſt occupier.

What is that right of the firſt occupier (24)? replies the other; if chance firſt led you to this ſpot, the ſame chance has given me the force neceſſary to drive you from it. Which of theſe two rights deſerves the preference? Would you know all the ſuperiority of mine? Look up to heaven and ſee the eagle that darts upon the dove: turn thine eyes to the earth, and ſee the lion that preys upon the ſtag: look toward the ſea, and behold the gold-fiſh devoured by the ſhark. All things in nature ſhow that the weak is a prey to the powerful. Force is the gift of the gods; by that I have a right to poſſeſs all that I can ſeize. Heaven, by giving me theſe nervous arms, has declared its will. Be gone from hence, yield to ſuperior force, or dare the combat (25).

What anſwer can be given to the diſcourſe of this ſavage, or with what injuſtice can he be accuſed, if the law of firſt occupation be not yet eſtabliſhed?

Juſtice

Juſtice then ſuppoſes the eſtabliſhment of laws. The obſervance of juſtice ſuppoſes an equilibrium in the power of the inhabitants. The maintainance of that equilibrium is the maſterpiece of the ſcience of legiſlation. It is by a mutual and ſalutary fear that men are made to be juſt to each other. When this fear is no longer reciprocal, then juſtice becomes a meritorious virtue, and then the legiſlation of a people is vicious. Its perfection ſuppoſes that man is compelled to juſtice.

Juſtice is unknown to the ſolitary ſavage. If the poliſhed man have ſome idea of it, it is becauſe he knows the laws. But does he love juſtice for itſelf? It is experience that muſt inſtruct us in this matter.

CHAP. IX.

Of juſtice conſidered in poliſhed man and nations.

WHAT is the love man has for juſtice? To determine this queſtion, we muſt place him above all hope and fear; make him an oriental monarch.

When ſeated on his throne, he can levy on his people taxes without limits. Ought he to do it? No. The meaſure of all taxes is the wants of the ſtate. Every tax, when puſhed beyond thoſe wants, is a robbery, an injuſtice. No truth more evident than this. Yet, notwithſtanding man's pre-

tended love for equity, there is no Aſiatic monarch who does not commit this injuſtice, and commit it without remorſe. What can we infer from this fact? That man's love for juſtice is founded either on a fear of the evil attendants on iniquity, or from the hope of the good conſequences of eſteem, conſideration, and, in ſhort, from the power attached to the practice of juſtice.

The neceſſity we are under to form virtuous men, to reward and puniſh, to inſtitute wiſe laws, and to eſtabliſh a regular form of government, are ſo many evident proofs of this truth.

Let what I have ſaid of man be applied to nations. Two nations are neighbours; they are, in certain reſpects, in a reciprocal dependence: they are conſequently forced to make conventions between them, and to form the law of nations. Do they regard it? Yes, ſo long as they reciprocally fear each other, ſo long as a certain balance of power ſubſiſts between them. When this balance is deſtroyed, the ſtrongeſt nation violates their conventions without concern (26). It becomes unjuſt, becauſe it can be ſo with impunity.

The ſo much boaſted reſpect in man for juſtice, is never * any thing more than a reſpect for power.

* *Perhaps there are many men, there are certainly ſome, who on a cloſe examination of their own hearts, cannot aſſent to this ſtrong aſſertion of our author. Whether the real love of juſtice in theſe men proceeds from principles ſtrongly inculcated and long practiſed, that is from education; or from an innate principle, is here immaterial.*

Yet

Yet there are no people who do not in war ſay juſtice is on our ſide. But when, and in what ſituation? When ſurrounded by powerful nations, who may take part in their quarrels. What is then the object of their pretence? To ſhow their enemy to be unjuſt, ambitious, and dreadful: to excite the jealouſy of other nations againſt them, and by making allies to become ſtrong by the force of others. The object of a nation in ſuch appeals to juſtice, is to increaſe its power, and to ſecure a ſuperiority over a rival nation. The pretended love of nations for juſtice, is therefore nothing but a real love of power.

To confirm this truth, ſuppoſe the neighbours of two rival nations to be fully employed with their own affairs, and not able to take any part in the quarrel, what then happens? The moſt powerful of the two nations, without any appeal to juſtice, or regard to equity, carries fire and ſword into the country of its enemy. Force then becomes right: and miſerable is the condition of the weak and conquered.

When Brennus at the head of the Gauls attacked the Cluſians, "What offence, ſaid the Ro-"man ambaſſadors, have the Cluſians given you?" Brennus laughed at the queſtion. "Their of-"fence, he replied, is the refuſal they make to "divide their country with me. It is the ſame "offence that the people of Albi, the Fidenats

"and

" and Ardeats formerly gave you, and lately the " Vienians, the Faliſci, and the Volſci. To " avenge yourſelves, you took up arms, and " waſhed away the injury with their blood; you " ſubdued the people, pillaged their houſes, and " laid waſte their cities and their countries: and " in this you did no wrong or injuſtice: you " obeyed the moſt ancient laws, which give " to the ſtrong the poſſeſſions of the weak; the " ſovereign law of nature, that begins with God, " and ends with animals. Suppreſs, therefore, O " Romans, your pity for the Cluſians. Compaſ- " ſion is yet unknown to the Gauls: do not in- " ſpire them with that ſentiment, leſt they ſhould " have compaſſion on thoſe you oppreſs."

Few chiefs have the boldneſs and candour of Brennus. Their language is different, but their actions are the ſame; and, in fact, they have all the ſame contempt for juſtice (27).

The hiſtory of the world is a vaſt collection of reiterated proofs of this truth (28). The invaſions of the Huns, the Goths, the Vandals, the Suevi, and the Romans; the conqueſts of the Spaniards and Portugueſe in both Indies, and laſtly our croiſades; all prove that nations in their enterprizes conſult force, not juſtice. Such is the picture hiſtory preſents us. Now the ſame principle that actuates nations, muſt neceſſarily, and in like manner actuate the individuals who compoſe them.

Let

Let the conduct of nations, therefore, elucidate that of individuals.

CHAP. X.

Individuals, like nations, eſteem juſtice ſolely for the conſideration and power it procures them.

IS not a man, with regard to his fellow-citizens, nearly in the ſame ſtate of independence, that one people are to another? Man then loves juſtice (29) merely for the power and happineſs it procures him. To what other cauſe, in fact, except to the extreme love of power, can we attribute our admiration of conquerors (30)? "The "conqueror, ſaid the pirate Demetrius to Alex-"ander, is a man, who at the head of a hundred "thouſand ſoldiers, takes at once a hundred thou-"ſand purſes, and cut the throats of a hundred "thouſand citizens, does in great what the rob-"ber does in little; and who, by being more un-"juſt than the latter, is more deſtructive to ſo-"ciety." The robber is a terror to an individual. The conqueror, like the tyrant, is the ſcourge of a nation. What makes us reſpect Alexander and Cortez, and deſpiſe Cartouch and Raſſiat. The power of the one, and the impotence of the other. In the robber, it is not properly the crime, but the weakneſs we deſpiſe (31). The conqueror appears as inveſted with great

power,

power; we would be inveſted with the ſame power, and we cannot deſpiſe what we wiſh to attain.

The love man has for power is ſuch, that in all caſes the exerciſe of it is agreeable to him, becauſe it makes him recollect his poſſeſſion of it. Every man would have great power, and every man knows that it is almoſt impoſſible to be at once conſtantly juſt and powerful. Man makes, without doubt, a better or worſe uſe of his power, according to the education he has received. But be it as good as it may, there is no great man who does not commit ſome acts of injuſtice. The abuſe of power is connected with its exiſtence, as the effect with the cauſe. Corneille ſays,

Qui peut tout ce qu'il veut, veut plus que ce qu'il doit (32).

He who can do whatever he will, wills more than he ought.

This verſe is a moral axiom confirmed by experience; and yet no one refuſes a great place for fear of expoſing himſelf to the temptation of injuſtice *.

Our love of equity, therefore, is always ſubordinate to our love of power. Man, ſolely anxious for himſelf, ſeeks nothing but his own happineſs. If he reſpects equity, it is want that compels him to it (33).

* *This muſt be underſtood with limitation: many men have refuſed power, from a fear of temptation, and a conſciouſneſs of their own weakneſs.*

If

'If a difference ariſe between two men nearly equal in power, each of them, reſtrained by a reciprocal fear, has recourſe to juſtice; each of them ſubmits to its deciſion; that he may intereſt the public in his favour, and by that mean acquire a certain ſuperiority over his adverſary.

'But let one of theſe two men be greatly ſuperior in power to the other, ſo that he can rob him with impunity; and then, deaf to the voice of juſtice, he does not litigate, but command. It is not equity, nor even the appearance of equity, that determines between the weak and the powerful; but force, crime, and tyranny. It is thus the divan gives the name of ſeditious to the remonſtrances of the impotent, whom it oppreſſes.'

To ſhow ſtill more ſtrongly the great love that men have for power, I ſhall add but one proof to the foregoing, and which is the ſtrongeſt.

CHAP. XI.

The love of power, under every form of government, is the ſole motive of man's actions.

"UNDER every form of government, ſays "M. Monteſquieu, there is a different prin-"ciple of action." "Fear in deſpotic ſtates, "honour under monarchies, and virtue in repub-"lics, are the ſeveral motive principles."

But

But on what proof does M. Monteſquieu found this aſſertion *. Is it quite evident that fear, honour, and the love of virtue, are the different motives in different governments? May we not aſſert on the contrary, that one cauſe alone, but varied in its applications, is equally the principle of

* Fear, ſays M. Monteſquieu, is the motive principle in deſpotic empires. He is miſtaken. Fear does not increaſe, but weaken the ſpring of the mind. I can admit nothing for the active principle of a nation, but the conſtant objects of the deſire of almoſt all the inhabitants. Now, in deſpotic ſtates there are but two; one is the deſire of money, and the other the favour of the monarch.

In the two other forms of government there are, according to the ſame writer, two other motive principles, of a nature, ſays he, very different: the one is honour, under monarchal ſtates; the other virtue, which is applicable to republics only.

The words Honour and Virtue are not indeed perfectly ſynonimous. Yet if the word Honour conſtantly brings to the mind the idea of ſome virtue, theſe terms differ only in the extent of their ſignification. Honour and virtue are therefore principles of the ſame nature.

If M. Monteſquieu had not propoſed to give each form of government a different principle of action, he would have perceived the ſame principle in all. This principle is the love of power, and conſequently perſonal intereſt modified according to the different conſtitutions of the ſtates, and their ſeveral legiſlations. If virtue be, as he ſays, the active principle in republics, it is at moſt only in poor and warlike republics. The love of gold is that of commercial republics.

It appears, therefore, that in all governments man obeys his own intereſt; but that his intereſt is not the ſame in all. The more we examine in this reſpect the manners of a people, the more convinced we are, that it is to their legiſlation they owe their vices and their virtues. The principles of M. Monteſquieu on this matter appear to me to be more ſhowey than ſolid.

activity in all empires; and that if M. Monteſquieu, leſs affected by the ſhow of his diviſion, had more ſcrupulouſly diſcuſſed this queſtion, he would have attained more profound, clear, and general ideas: he would have perceived in the love of power, the motive principle of every individual: he would have found in the various means of acquiring power, the principle to which we ought, in all ages and all countries, refer the different conduct of men. In effect, power is in every nation either concentered in one man, as in Morocco and Turky; or, as in Venice and Poland, diſtributed among ſeveral; or, as in Sparta, Rome, and England, divided among the whole body of the nation. According to theſe ſeveral partitions of authority, we are ſenſible the inhabitants will contract different habits and manners, and yet all propoſe the ſame object, which is that of pleaſing the ſupreme power, of rendering it propitious to them, and by that mean obtaining ſome portion or emanation of its authority.

Of the GOVERNMENT of a SINGLE PERSON.

If this government be ſtrictly arbitrary, the ſupreme power reſides in the hands of a ſultan: who is in general badly educated. Does he grant his protection to certain vices; is he without humanity, without love of glory; and does he ſacrifice to his humour the happineſs of his ſubjects? The courtiers, jealous of his favour only, model

their conduct by his, and in proportion as the deſpot ſhews more indifference for the patriotic virtues, they affect to hold them in the greater contempt.

In this country we find no ſuch men as Timoleon, Leonidas, Regulus, &c. Such citizens cannot flouriſh without that degree of conſideration and reſpect which was ſhown to the virtuous man; who in Rome and Greece, being ſecure of the national eſteem, ſaw nothing above him.

In a deſpotic ſtate, what reſpect will be paid to the honeſt man? The ſultan, ſole diſpoſer of rewards and puniſhments, centers all conſideration within himſelf. No one can there ſhine but by his reflected light, and the vileſt favourite holds an equal rank with the greateſt hero. In every government of this ſort, emulation muſt be extinguiſhed. The intereſt of the deſpot being frequently oppoſite to the intereſt of the public, muſt obſcure every idea of virtue, and the love of power, the motive principle of each individual, cannot there form juſt and virtuous men.

Of the GOVERNMENT of SEVERAL.

In governments of this ſort the ſupreme power is in the hands of a certain number of great men The body of the nobles is the deſpot (34). Thei object is to keep the people in a ſhameful and in human poverty and ſlavery. Now what is to b done to gain their protection and favour? Ent

into their views; favour their tyranny, and perpetually ſacrifice the happineſs of a great number, to the pride of a few. In ſuch a nation, it is alſo impoſſible that the love of power ſhould produce good citizens.

Of the Government of All.

In this ſtate, the ſupreme power is equally divided among all the orders of the inhabitants. The nation is then the deſpot. What does it require? The happineſs of the greateſt number. By what means is its favour to be attained? By ſervices rendered it. Therefore, every action conformable to the intereſt of the greateſt member is juſt and tuous: conſequently, the love of power, the motive principle of the inhabitants, muſt compel them to the love of juſtice and of talents.

What does this love produce? The public happineſs.

The ſupreme power divided among all the orders of inhabitants, is the ſoul that is equally diffuſed through all the members of the ſtate; animates it, and renders it healthful and vigorous.

It cannot therefore be wonderful, that this form of government is always cited as the beſt. Free and happy citizens will obey no legiſlation but what themſelves have formed: they own nothing above them but equity and the laws. They live in peace; for in morality, as in phyſics, it is the equilibrium of force that produces tranquility. If

an

an ambitious man deſtroy this equilibrium, and there no longer exiſts a mutual dependence among the ſeveral orders of citizens; or if there be, as in Perſia, one man, or, as in Poland, a body of men, who have an intereſt ſeparate from that of their nation: nothing is then to be ſeen but oppreſſors and oppreſſed; the inhabitants are divided into two claſſes only, tyrants and ſlaves.

If M. Monteſquieu had thought deeply on theſe matters, he would have perceived, that in every country men are united by the love of power, but that power is obtained by different means, according as the ſupreme authority is centered, as in the Eaſt, in the hands of a ſingle perſon; or divided, as in Poland, among the body of the nobles; or, as in Rome and Sparta, among the ſeveral orders of the ſtate: and that it is to the different manners by which power is acquired, that men owe their vices and their virtues: and that they do not love juſtice merely for itſelf.

One of the ſtrongeſt proofs of this truth, is the baſeneſs with which kings themſelves honoured injuſtice in the perſon of Cromwell. This Cromwell, the blind and criminal inſtrument of the future liberty of his country, was nothing more than a lawleſs and formidable robber. Yet ſcarce was he ſtyled Protector, when all the Chriſtian princes courted his friendſhip, and all of them offered, by their deputations and their embaſſies, to legitimate, as far as was in their power, the uſur-

per's crimes. No one then was offended at the baſeneſs with which his alliance was courted. Injuſtice, therefore, is never deſpiſed but in the weak. Now if the motive principle of monarchs and whole nations be that of the individuals who compoſe them, we may reſt aſſured that man, ſolely ſolicitous to increaſe his importance, loves not in juſtice any thing but the power and happineſs it procures him.

It is to the ſame motive he owes his love of virtue.

CHAP. XII.

Of virtue.

THE word Virtue, equally applicable to prudence, courage, and charity *, has, therefore, only a vague ſignification. However it conſtantly recalls to the mind the confuſed idea of ſome quality uſeful to ſociety.

When qualities of this ſort are common to the greateſt part of the citizens a nation is happy within itſelf, formidable without, and worthy of imitation by poſterity †. Virtue, always uſeful to

* *Virtue*, ſays Cicero, is derived from the word *vis*: its natural ſignification is *fortitude*. It has the ſame root in Greek. Force and courage are the firſt ideas that men could form of virtue.

† *Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man muſt be,*
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree,

The

man, and conſequently always reſpectable, ought, at leaſt in certain countries, to reflect power and conſideration on its poſſeſſors. Now it is the love of conſideration that man takes to be in him the love of virtue! Each one pretends to love it for itſelf. This phraſe is in every one's mouth, but in no one's heart. What motive makes the monk faſt, wear a hair cloth, and flog himſelf? The hope of eternal happineſs: the fear of hell, and the deſire of heaven.

Pleaſure and pain, thoſe productive principles of monachal virtue, are the principles of the patriotic virtues alſo. The hope of rewards makes them flouriſh. Whatever diſintereſted love we may effect to have, *without intereſt to love virtue there is no virtue.* To know man, is this reſpect, we muſt ſtudy him; not by his converſation, but his actions. When I ſpeak I put on a maſk; when I act I am forced to take it off. It is not, therefore, by what I ſay, but what I do, that men are to judge me; and they will judge me rightly.

Who more than the clergy preach the love of humility and poverty? And what better than the hiſtory of the clergy itſelf, proves the falſity of that love.

The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wiſe;
And e'en the beſt, by fits what they deſpiſe.
'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill;
For, vice or virtue, ſelf direct. it ſtill.

POPE.

The elector of Bavaria, they ſay, has not, for maintaining his troops, his police, and his court, ſo large a revenue as the church has for maintaining its prieſts. Yet in Bavaria, as every where elſe, the clergy preach up the virtue of poverty. It is therefore the poverty of others they extol.

To know the real eſteem in which virtue is held, let us ſuppoſe it baniſhed to the dominion of a monarch where it can expect no grace or favour. What reſpect will be paid at his court to virtue? None. Nothing can be there reſpected but baſeneſs, intrigue, and cruelty, diſguiſed under the names of decency, wiſdom, and firmneſs. Does the vizir there give audience. The nobles, proſtrate at his feet, can ſcarce vouchſafe to caſt a look upon merit. But, they will ſay, the homage of theſe courtiers is forced; it is the effect of their fear. Be it ſo. More reſpect then is paid to fear, than to virtue. Theſe courtiers, they will add, deſpiſe the idol they worſhip. It is no ſuch matter. Men hate the powerful; they do not deſpiſe them. It is not the wrath of the giant, but of the pigmy, we deſpiſe. His impotence renders him ridiculous. Whatever may be ſaid, we do not really deſpiſe him, whom we dare not deſpiſe to his face. Secret contempt proves weakneſs and what men pretend to in this caſe, is nothing more than the boaſtings of an impotent hatred (35). The man in power is the moral giant; he is always

ways honoured. The homage rendered to virtue is tranſient, that to force eternal. In the foreſt, it is the lion, and not the ſtag, that is reſpected. Force is all upon the earth. Virtue without importance becomes inſignificant. If in the ages of oppreſſion it has ſometimes ſhone with the greateſt luſtre, if when Thebes and Rome groaned under tyranny, the intrepid Pelopidas, and the virtuous Brutus, aroſe and armed, it was becauſe the ſceptre then ſhook in the hands of tyranny: becauſe virtue could ſtill open a paſſage to grandeur and power. When it can no longer make its way, when tyranny, by the aid of luxury and baſeneſs, is ſeated firm on its throne, and has bowed the people down to ſlavery, then no longer are ſeen thoſe ſublime virtues, that, by the influence of example, might ſtill be ſo uſeful to mankind. The ſeeds of heroiſm are ſuffocated.

In the Eaſt, a maſculine virtue would be a folly, even in the ſight of thoſe who ſtill pique themſelves on honeſty. Whoever ſhould there plead the cauſe of the people, would paſs for ſeditious.

Thamas Kauli-Kan entered India with his army; rapine and deſolation followed him. A bold Indian ſtopped him: "O Thamas, he ſaid, "if thou art a god, act like a god. If thou art "a prophet, conduct us to the way of ſalvation. If "thou art a king, ceaſe to be a barbarian; pro-"tect the people, and do not deſtroy them." "I "am not, replied Thamas, a god, to act like a god;

" nor a prophet, to lead you to ſalvation; nor a " king; to make you happy: but I am a man, " ſent by the wrath of heaven to chaſtiſe theſe na- " tions (36)." The diſcourſe of the Indian was regarded as ſeditious (37), and the anſwer of Thamas applauded by the army.

If there be on the theatre a character univerſally admired, it is that of Leontine. Yet in what eſteem would ſuch a character have been in the court of a Phocas? His magnanimity would have alarmed the favourites, and the people, ever at length the echo of the great, would have condemned his noble boldneſs.

Four and twenty hours reſidence in an Oriental court would prove what I here advance. Fortune and authority are there alone reſpected. How ſhould virtue be there eſteemed, or even known? To form clear ideas of it, we muſt live in a country where (38) public utility is the only meaſure of human actions. That country is yet unknown to geographers. But the Europeans, they will ſay, are at leaſt in this reſpect very different from the Aſiatics. If they be not free, they are at leaſt not entirely degraded to ſlavery. They, therefore, may know what virtue is, and eſteem it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the manner in which the greateſt part of Europeans conſider virtue.

THE greateſt part of the people of Europe honour virtue in ſpeculation: this is an effect of their education. They deſpiſe it in practice; that is an effect of the form of their governments.

If the European admire in hiſtory, and applaud on the theatre, generous actions, to which the Aſiatic is frequently inſenſible, that is, as I have juſt ſaid, the effect of his inſtruction.

The ſtudy of the Greek and Roman hiſtory, makes a part of his inſtruction. In the courſe of this ſtudy, what mind, without intereſt and without prejudice, is not affected with the ſame patriotic ſentiments that animated the ancient heroes? Youth cannot refuſe its eſteem to thoſe virtues, that, conſecrated by univerſal reſpect, have been celebrated by the moſt illuſtrious writers of every age.

For want of the ſame inſtruction, the Aſiatic feels not the ſame ſentiments, nor conceives the ſame veneration for the manly virtues of great men. If Europeans admire them without imitation, it is becauſe there is ſcarce any government where

where theſe virtues lead to great employments, and nothing is really eſteemed but power.

When I ſee repreſented in hiſtory, or on the theatre, a great character of Greece, Rome, Britain, or Scandinavia, I admire it. The principles of virtue imbibed in my infancy force me to it; and I the more readily encourage this ſentiment, as I do not in any manner compare myſelf with this hero. If his virtue be ſtrong and mine weak, I diſguiſe its weakneſs: I refer to place, time, and circumſtances, the difference I obſerve between him and myſelf. But if this great man be my fellow-citizen, why do I not imitate his conduct? His preſence humbles my pride. If I can avenge myſelf of him, I do it: I blame in him what I applaud in the ancients. I rail at his generous actions: I depreciate his merit, and at leaſt in appearance, deſpiſe his impotence.

My reaſon, that judges the virtue of the dead, obliges me to eſteem in ſpeculation the heroes that have rendered themſelves uſeful to their country. The picture of ancient heroiſm produces an involuntary reſpect in every mind that is not entirely debaſed. But in my cotemporary, that heroiſm is odious to me. I feel in his preſence two contradictory ſentiments, one eſteem, the other envy. Subject to theſe two different impulſions, I hate the living hero, but erect a trophy on his tomb, and thus ſatisfy at once my pride and my reaſon. When virtue is without authority,

rity, its impotence gives me a right to deſpiſe it, and I avail myſelf of that right. Weakneſs attracts ſcorn and inſult (39).

To be honoured while we live, we muſt be powerful (40). Thus power is the only object of man's deſire. He who had the choice of the ſtrength of Encladus, and the virtues of Ariſtides, would give the preference to the former. In the opinion of all the critics, the character of Eneas is more juſt and virtuous than that of Achilles. Why then does the latter excite greater admiration? Becauſe Achilles was ſtrong, and we have more deſire to be powerful than juſt, and we always admire what we would be.

It is always power and importance that we ſeek, under the name of virtue. Why do they require on the theatre, that virtue ſhould always triumph over vice? From whence aroſe that rule? From an interior and confuſed preception, that we only love in virtue the conſideration it procures. Men are ſeriouſly anxious about nothing but authority, and it is the love of power that furniſhes the legiſlator with the means of rendering them more virtuous and more happy.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

The love of power is in man the moſt favourable diſpoſition to virtue.

IF virtue were in us the effect of a particular organiſation, or a gift of the Divinity, there would be no honeſt men but ſuch as were ſo organiſed by nature, or predeſtined by Heaven. Laws, good or bad, forms of government, more or leſs perfect, would have little influence on the manners of a people. Sovereigns would not have it in their power to form good citizens, and the ſublime employment of a legiſlature would be, ſo to ſay, without functions. But if we regard, on the contrary, virtue as the effect of a deſire common to all (as is the deſire of command) the legiſlature being always able to annex eſteem and riches, in a word, power, under ſome denomination, to the practice of virtue, it can always compel men to it. Under a good legiſlation, the only vicious muſt then be the fools. It is therefore always to the greater or leſs abſurdity in the laws, that we muſt attribute the greater or leſs ſtupidity or iniquity of the citizens.

Heaven, by inſpiring all men with the love of power, has given them a moſt precious gift. What imports it whether all men be born virtuous, if all be

be born with a paſſion, that will render them ſuch.

This truth being fully proved, it is for the magiſtrate to diſcover, in the univerſal love that men have for power, the means of ſecuring the virtue of the citizens, and the happineſs of the nation.

As to what regards myſelf, I have accompliſhed my taſk if I have proved, that man directs, and ever will direct, his deſires, his ideas, and his actions, to his felicity: that the love of virtue is always founded in him on the deſire of happineſs: that he only loves in virtue the riches and happineſs it procures; and laſtly, that even to the deſire of glory, all is in man nothing more than a diſguiſed love of power. It is in this laſt love that there is ſtill concealed the principle of intolerance; which is of two kinds, the one civil, the other religious.

CHAP. XV.

Of civil intolerance.

MAN is born ſurrounded with pains and pleaſures. If he deſire the ſword of power, it is to drive away the one, and to poſſeſs the other. His thirſt for power is in this reſpect inſatiable. Not content with commanding a people, he would command their opinions alſo: he is not leſs anxious of ſubduing the reaſon of his fellow-

low-citizens, than a conqueror is of uſurping the treaſures, and the provinces of his neighbours.

He does not think himſelf truly their maſter if he do not bring their minds into ſubjection. To effect this he employs force: he at length ſubdues reaſon. Men are completely degraded by believing opinions they are forced to profeſs. What reaſoning begins is finiſhed by violence.

The intolerance of monarchs is always the effect of their love of power. Not to think as they do, is to ſet a bound to their authority; it is to aſſume a power equal to theirs. By this they are enraged.

What is in certain countries the crime moſt ſeverely puniſhed? Contradiction. For what crime was the Oriental puniſhment of an iron cage invented in France? On whom was it inflicted? Was it ſome cowardly or ignorant general who conducted a ſiege, or defended a place badly; or who by incapacity, jealouſy, or treaſon, ſuffered provinces to be ravaged? Or was it ſome miniſter who loaded the people with intolerable taxes (41) and whoſe edicts were deſtructive of the public felicity? No: the wretch condemned to this puniſhment, was the writer of a Dutch gazette, who criticized, perhaps too ſeverely, the projects of ſome French miniſters (42), and made all Europe laugh at their expence (43).

Whom in Spain and Italy do they ſuffer to rot in a dungeon? Is it a judge that ſells juſtice, or a governor

governor that abuſes his power? No: it is the hawker who ſells for bread books, in which doubt is made of the humility and poverty of the clergy. To whom in ſome countries do they give the name of a bad citizen? Is it to the thief, who purloins and diſſipates the national treaſure? No: ſuch crimes go almoſt every where unpuniſhed; for they every where find protectors. He alone is called a bad citizen, who in a ſong or an epigram laughs at the knavery or futility (44) of a man in power.

I have ſeen the country where the infamous is not he who does the evil, but he that diſcovers the author of it. Is a houſe ſet on fire? The incendiary is careſſed, and he that diſcovers him is puniſhed. Under ſuch governments, the greateſt of crimes is frequently the love of our country, and a reſiſtance to the unjuſt commands of thoſe in power.

Why is merit always ſuſpected by a weak miniſter? From whence his hatred to men of letters (45)? Becauſe he regards them as ſo many torches that may diſcover the groſſneſs of his blunders (46).

There was formerly about the perſon of a prince, a ſubtile fellow, who, under the denomination of a fool, was ſometimes permitted to ſpeak the truth (47). Theſe fools diſguſted: their employment has been every where ſuppreſſed, and it is perhaps the only general alteration that

ſovereigns have made in their dependents. Theſe fools were the laſt wiſe men that were ſuffered to attend the great. If we would be admitted to their preſence, and be found agreeable, we muſt talk as they do, and confirm them in their errors. But this is not the part of a man, ſagacious, candid, and loyal. He will think for himſelf, and ſpeak what he thinks; the great know it, and hate him. They find in him a boundary to their authority. It is men of this ſort who are above all others prohibited from thinking and writing on matters of government. From whence it comes that kings, deprived of the advice of intelligent men, ſacrifice their real and durable power to a momentaneous fear of contradiction. In fact, if a prince be only ſtrong by the ſtrength of his people; his people only ſtrong by the wiſdom of adminiſtration, and if that adminiſtration be neceſſarily taken from the body of the people, it is impoſſible under a government that perſecutes the man who thinks, and where the people are all kept in darkneſs, that ſuch a nation ſhould produce great miniſters. The danger of acquiring inſtruction there, deſtroys inſtruction. The people groan under the ſcepter of a haughty ignorance, that ſoon precipitates the tyrant and his nation in one common ruin (48). This ſort of intolerance is a rock, againſt which, ſooner or later, the greateſt empires are daſhed in ruins.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Intolerance frequently fatal to princes.

PRESENT power and pleaſure are frequently deſtructive of future pleaſure and power. A prince, to command with more ſovereign authority, would have his ſubjects without ideas, without ſpirit, without character (49); in a word, automata, always obedient to the impreſſion he gives them. If they become ſuch, he will be powerful at home, and impotent abroad: he will be the tyrant of his ſubjects, and the contempt of his neighbours.

Such is the ſituation of a deſpotic monarch, produced by a momentary pride. He ſays to himſelf, it is over my people I habitually exerciſe my power: it is therefore their oppoſition, that frequently recalling to my mind the idea of a want of ſufficient power, makes it the more inſupportable. If in conſequence of this, he prohibit the liberty of thought to his ſubjects, he by that act declares, that, indifferent to the greatneſs and happineſs of his people, it is of little importance to him, whether he govern badly or not, but of great importance that he govern without control. Now, from the moment the ſtrong ſpeaks, the weak becomes ſilent, he bows the head, and no

longer thinks; for why ſhould he think, when he cannot communicate his thoughts?

But, it will be ſaid, if the ſtupor in which fear holds the minds of men be hurtful to a ſtate, are we to conclude that the liberty of thinking and writing is without inconvenience.

In Perſia, ſays Chardin, they may, even in coffee-houſes cenſure aloud, and with impunity, the conduct of the vizir; for the miniſter, deſirous of knowing the evil he does, is ſenſible that he cannot know it but from the voice of the public. Perhaps there are countries in Europe more barbarous than Perſia.

But ſtill, if every one might think and write, what books would they make on ſubjects they do not underſtand! What abſurdities would be publiſhed! So much the better: they would leave fewer abſurdities to be committed by the vizirs. The critic would expoſe the errors of the author; the public would laugh at him; and that is all the puniſhment he would deſerve. If legiſlation be a ſcience, its perfection muſt be the work of time and experience. On any ſubject, one excellent book ſuppoſes an infinity of bad. The tragedies of the paſſion muſt have preceded Heraclius, Phedra, Mahomet, &c. If the preſs ceaſe to be free (50), the man in place, ignorant of his failings, will inceſſantly commit new blunders, and commit almoſt as many abſurdities as the author wrote (51). Now, it is of little import-

ance,

ance to a nation, that an author publiſhes abſurdities; ſo much the worſe for him: but it is of great importance that the miniſter do not make them; for if he do, ſo much the worſe for them.

The liberty of the preſs is in no ſort contrary to the general intereſt (52); that liberty is to a people the ſupport of emulation. Who are they that ſhould maintain this emulation? The people in power. Let them watch carefully over its preſervation, for when once extinguiſhed, it is almoſt impoſſible to kindle it again. If a people once poliſhed fall into a ſtate of barbarity, what can relieve them? Nothing but a conqueſt. That alone can give new manners to a people, and render them again powerful and renowned. If a people be degraded, let them be conquered. It is the deſire of an honeſt citizen, a man that intereſts himſelf in the glory of his nation, who thinks himſelf great in its grandeur, and happy in its proſperity. The view of the deſpot is not the ſame, becauſe he does not confound himſelf with his ſlaves: ſo that, indifferent to their glory and their happineſs, nothing affects him (53) but their ſervile obedience.

The tyrant when blindly obeyed is content. If his ſubjects be without virtue, if his empire be enfeebled, if it periſh by a conſumption, it is of little moment to him: it is enough if the duration of the diſeaſe conceal the true cauſe, and that the phyſician cannot be accuſed of ignorance. The

only fear of ſultans and vizirs is, that a ſudden convulſion ſhould ſeize the empire. There are vizirs like ſurgeons, whoſe ſole care is, that the ſtate or the patient do not expire under their hands. If one or other of them die under a regimen preſcribed, the reputation of the miniſter or the ſurgeon is ſafe, and they give themſelves no concern about it.

In arbitrary governments all concern is confined to the preſent moment. They aſk not of the people induſtry and virtue, but money and ſubmiſſion. The deſpot, the more ſilently to devour his people, like the ſpider that inceſſantly twines round the inſect it has made his prey new threads, loads them daily with new chains (54). When he has at laſt by fear ſuſpended in them all activity, where is his reſource againſt the attack of a neighbouring power? He does not foreſee that he and his ſubjects muſt conſequently ſoon ſubmit to the yoke of the conqueror. But deſpotiſm foreſees nothing.

Every remonſtrance diſguſts and irritates a deſpot. He reſembles the ill-taught child that eats the poiſonous fruit, and beats his mother who would take it from him. What account is made of a faithful and courageous citizen under ſuch a reign? He is regarded and puniſhed as a fool (55). What regard under ſuch a reign is had to a mean and bad citizen (56)? He is regarded and recompenſed as a wiſe man. Sultans will be flatter-

ed

ed (57), and they are. Who can conſtantly refuſe their demands? Who, under ſuch a government, can earneſtly intereſt himſelf in the public welfare? If there be a wiſe man here and there in the empire, every one is deaf to his counſel. They are like lamps that burn in a ſepulchre, their lights ſhine on no man. The tyrant confides in men grown old in attendance, and that have the ſpirit and manners of the court. They were flatterers of this ſort, that hurried on the Stuarts to their ruin. "Certain prelates, ſays "an illuſtrious Engliſh writer, perceiving the bi-"gotted weakneſs of James I. made uſe of it to "perſuade him that the public tranquility de-"pended on the uniformity of public worſhip, that "is on certain religious ceremonies. James em-"braced this opinion, and tranſmited it to his de-"ſcendants. What was the conſequence? The "exile and ruin of his houſe."

"When heaven, ſays Velleius Paterculus, "would chaſtiſe a ſovereign, it inſpires him with "a love of flattery (58), and a hatred of contra-"diction. At that inſtant the underſtanding of "the ſovereign is obſcured. He ſhuns the com-"pany of wiſe men, walks in darkneſs, falls into "a fathomleſs pit, and, as the Latin proverb ſays, "paſſes from the ſmoke to the fire." If ſuch be the ſigns of the wrath of heaven, againſt what ſultan is it not irritated? Which among them chooſes his favourites from the moſt faithful and intelligent

of his ſubjects? The philoſopher Anacharſis, they ſay, baſely flattered a king of Scythia, and was by his order pounded in a mortar; but that mortar is loſt.

"What do they report of me and my govern-
"ment? ſaid an emperor of China to Confucius.
"Every one, replied the philoſopher, keeps a
"mournful ſilence. That is what what I would
"have them do, ſaid the emperor: and it is what
"you ought to fear, replied the philoſopher.
"The ſick man when flattered is abandoned; his
"end is near. A monarch ought to be informed
"of the diſorder of his mind, as a ſick man of
"that of his body: without this liberty the ſtate
"and the prince are loſt."

This anſwer diſpleaſed the emperor; he wanted to be praiſed. The preſent intereſt almoſt always weighs more with pride than the intereſt that is to come, and in this reſpect the people are princes.

CHAP. XVII.

Flattery is not leſs pleaſing to the people than to ſovereigns.

THE people, like kings, would be courted and flattered. The greateſt part of the Athenian orators were nothing better than vile adulators of the populace. Prince, people, individual,

vidual (59), all are greedy of praiſe. To what can we refer this univerſal paſſion? To the love of power.

Whoever praiſes a man awakens in him the idea of power, with which the idea of happineſs is always connected.

Whoever contradicts him, on the contrary, awakens in him the idea of weakneſs, to which is always joined the idea of misfortune. The love of praiſe is common to all; but the people, too ſenſible of praiſe, have ſometimes given the name of good patriots to their meaneſt flatterers. Let every man extol with tranſport the virtues of his country, but let him not be blind to its vices. The pupil moſt ſincerely beloved is not the moſt praiſed. A true friend is never a flatterer.

Private perſons are too much diſpoſed to extol the virtues of their fellow-citizens; they regard it as a common cauſe. Adulation of our countrymen is not the meaſure of our love for our country; in general, every man loves thoſe of his own country: the love of Frenchmen is natural to the French. To render me a bad citizen, the law muſt make me ſuch by detaching my intereſt from that of the public.

The virtuous man is known by the deſire he has to render his compatriots, if it be poſſible, more illuſtrious and more happy. In England the true patriots are thoſe that exert their utmoſt force againſt the abuſe of government; but to whom

whom do they give that title in Portugal? To him who moſt ſervilely adulates the man in power; yet what a citizen! what a patriot!

It is to a thorough knowledge of the motives of our love for flattery, and our hatred for contradiction, that we owe the ſolution of an infinity of moral problems, otherwiſe inexplicable. Why is every new truth at firſt ſo badly received? Becauſe every truth of that ſort always contradicts ſome opinion generally received, ſhews the weakneſs or falſity of an infinity of judgments, and conſequently an infinity of people have an intereſt in hating and perſecuting the author.

M. Come improved the inſtrument uſed in lithotomy; it operates in a manner leſs dangerous and painful than the other. What of that? The pride of the celebrated ſurgeons was ſhocked; they perſecuted and would have baniſhed him from France: they ſolicited a lettre de cachet, but by chance they were refuſed. If the man of genius be almoſt every where more rigorouſly puniſhed than the aſſaſſin, it is becauſe the one has for enemies only the relations of the murdered, the other all his fellow-citizens.

I have known a devout woman aſk of a miniſter, at the ſame time, the pardon of a robber, and the impriſonment of a Janſeniſt and a deiſt; What was her motive? Pride. What is it to me, ſhe would have freely ſaid, that they rob and murder, provided it be not me, nor my confeſſor; what

what I want is, that men be religious, and that the deiſt do not by his arguments ſhock my vanity.

By endeavouring to inſtruct we humiliate. Let in the light upon a neſt of young owls, and they cry out againſt the injury you have done them. Men of mediocrity are young owls: when you preſent them with ſtrong and brilliant ideas, they exclaim againſt them as falſe, dangerous, and deſerving of puniſhment (60).

Under what prince, and in what country, can a man be great with impunity? In England, and under the reign of a Trajan or a Frederic; under every other form of government, and every other ſovereign, the reward of talents is perſecution. Strong and great ideas are almoſt every where proſcribed. The authors moſt generally read are thoſe that render common ideas in a new and ſtriking manner; they are praiſed becauſe they are not worthy of praiſe; becauſe they do not contradict any one. Contradiction is intolerable to all, but eſpecially to the great. To what degree did it not raiſe up the wrath of Charles V. againſt the Lutherans? That prince, they ſay, repented of having perſecuted them; it may be ſo: but at what time was it? When after having abdicated the empire he lived in retreat. He then ſaid to himſelf, I have thirty watches on my table, and no two of them mark preciſely the ſame time:

time*: how could I imagine then, that in matters of religion I could make all men think alike? What was my folly and my pride! Would to heaven that Charles had made this reflection ſooner; he would have been more juſt, more tolerant, and more virtuous. What ſeeds of war he would have deſtroyed! how much human blood would he have ſpared!

No prince, not even any private man, aſſigns bounds to his power. It is not enough to reign over our fellow-citizens, and command their ideas, we would even command their taſtes. M. Rouſſeau loves not French muſic; in this he agrees with all the other nations in Europe. When he publiſhed his opinion, a thouſand voices were raiſed againſt him: he deſerved to rot in a dungeon. They ſolicited a lettre de cachet, but the miniſter was luckily too prudent to grant it, and expoſe the French nation to ridicule.

There are no crimes to which human intolerance does not lead. To pretend in this matter to correct man, is to deſire that he ſhould prefer others to himſelf; that is, to deſire him to change his nature. A wiſe man never deſires impoſſibilities; his aim is to diſarm and not deſtroy in-

* A domeſtic careleſly entered his cell and threw down the table with the thirty watches; Charles laughed, and ſaid to the ſervant, you are more lucky than I, for you have found the way to make them all go together.

tolerance,

tollerance. But what ſhall reſtrain it? A reciprocal fear. When two men of equal force differ in opinion, neither of them inſult the other; for men rarely attack thoſe they think they cannot injure with impunity.

Why do military men diſpute with ſo much politeneſs? For fear of a duel. From whence ariſes the ſame politeneſs among men of letters? From the fear of ridicule: no man likes to be confounded with the pedants of a college. Now from thoſe two inſtances we may judge what the ſtill more efficacious fear of the law would produce among citizens.

Severe laws would ſuppreſs intolerance as well as robbery. If while I have the free uſe of my taſtes and opinions, the law forbids me to inſult thoſe of others; my intolerance then checked by the edicts of the magiſtrate, will not extend to acts of violence; but if through imprudence the government free me from the fear of a duel, ridicule, and the law, my intolerance unreſtrained will again render me ſavage and inhuman. The atrocious ferocity with which different religious ſects proſecute each other, is a proof of what is here aſſerted.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of religious intolerance.

THIS is the moſt dangerous of all intolerance; its motive is the love of power, religion its pretence. What is it they would puniſh in a heretic or unbeliever? The audacity of the man who would think for himſelf; who would believe his own reaſon before that of the prieſts, and thereby declare himſelf their equal. The pretence of avenging Heaven is never any thing more than that of his offended pride. Prieſts of almoſt all religions are the ſame.

In the ſight of a mufti, as in that of a bonze, an infidel is an impious wretch that ought to be deſtroyed by fire from heaven; a man ſo deſtructive to ſociety as to deſerve to be burned alive.

In the eyes of a wiſe man however, this ſame infidel is a man who does not believe the tale of mother Gooſe: for what is there wanting to make that tale a religion? A number of people to maintain its veracity.

Whence comes it that men covered with the rags of penitence and the maſk of charity have been in all times the moſt atrocious? How can it be poſſible that the light of toleration has not yet broke forth? What! muſt honeſt men hate and perſecute each other without remorſe for diſputes about

about words, frequently about the choice of errors, and becauſe they are diſtinguiſhed by the different names of Lutherans, Calviniſts, Catholics, Mahometans, &c.

When in a convocation the monk anathematiſes the derviſe, can he be ignorant that in the ſight of the derviſe the truly impious, the real infidel, is the Chriſtian, pope or monk who does not believe in Mahomet? Can each ſect, eternally condemned to ſtupidity, approve in itſelf what it deteſts in others?

Let them ſometimes recollect the ingenious parable of a celebrated painter. Tranſported in a dream to the gates of heaven, ſays he, the firſt object that ſtruck me was a venerable old man; by his keys, his bald head, and his long beard, I knew him to be St. Peter. The apoſtle ſat on the threſhold of the celeſtial gates; a crowd of people advanced towards him; the firſt who preſented himſelf was a papiſt; I have, ſaid he, all my life been a religious man, and yet honeſt enough. Go in, replies the ſaint, and place yourſelf upon the bench for catholics. The next was a proteſtant, who gave a like account of himſelf; the ſaint ſaid in like manner, place yourſelf among the reformed. Then came merchants of Bagdat, Balſora, &c. theſe were all muſulmans who had been conſtantly virtuous; St. Peter made them ſet down among the muſulmans. At laſt came an infidel; What is thy ſect? ſaid the apoſtle, I am

of

of no ſect, he replied, but I have always been honeſt; Then you may go in. But where ſhall I ſeat myſelf? Next thoſe who appear to you moſt rational.

Would to heaven that, elucidated by this fable, men would no longer pretend to command the opinions of others! God will have that truth be recompence of inquiry. The moſt efficacious prayers for obtaining it are, they ſay, ſtudy and application. O ſtupid monks! have you ever made thoſe prayers?

What is truth? You do not know: yet you perſecute him who, you ſay, knows it not, and have canoniſed the dragoons of Cevennes, and elevated to the dignity of a ſaint one Dominick, a barbarian, who founded the tribunal of the inquiſition, and maſſacred the Albigois (61). Under Charles IX. you made it the duty of the catholics to murder the proteſtants; and even in this age, ſo enlightened and philoſophic, when the toleration recommended in the goſpel ought to be the virtue of all men, there are Caveiracs who treat toleration as a crime and an indifference for religion, and who would again behold that day of blood and maſſacre, that horrid day of St. Bartholomew, when ſacerdotal pride ſtalked through the ſtreets commanding the death of Frenchmen; like the ſultan who paſſed through the ſtreets of Conſtantinople, followed by an executioner, demanding the blood of the Chriſtian who wore the red breeches.

More

More barbarous than the ſultan, you put ſwords in the hands of Chriſtians to cut the throat of each other.

O religions, (I ſpeak here of the falſe), you have ever been palpably ridiculous! and even if you were merely ridiculous, the man of underſtanding would not expoſe your abſurdities. If he thinks himſelf obliged to do it, it is becauſe thoſe abſurdities in men armed with the ſword of intolerance (63) are one of the moſt cruel ſcourges of humanity.

Among the diverſity of religions, which are thoſe that bear the greateſt hatred to others? The Catholic and the Jewiſh. Is this hatred the effect of ambition in their miniſters, or that of a ſtupid and ill-adviſed zeal? The difference betwen true and falſe zeal is remarkable; they cannot be miſtaken (64). The firſt is all gentleneſs, humanity, and charity; it pardons all, and offends none. Such at leaſt is the idea we muſt form of it from the words and actions of the Son of God (65).

CHAP. XIX.

Intolerance and perſecution are not of divine commandment.

TO whom gave Jeſus the appellation of race of vipers? Was it to the Pagans, the Eſſenes, or Saducees (66), who denied the immortality of

the ſoul, and even the exiſtence of the Divinity? No: it was was to the Phariſees and Jewiſh prieſts.

Will the Catholic prieſts by the fury of their intolerance continue to merit the ſame appellation? By what right do they perſecute a heretic? He does not think as we do, they will ſay: but to deſire to unite all men preciſely in the ſame belief, is to require them all to have the ſame eyes and the ſame complexion; a deſire contrary to nature. Hereſy is a name thoſe in power give to opinions commonly various, but contradictory to their own. Hereſy, like orthodoxy, is local. The heretic belongs to a ſect not predominant in the country where he lives: this man having leſs protection, and being conſequently weaker than others, may be inſulted with impunity. But why is he inſulted? Becauſe the ſtrong perſecute the weak even in their opinions.

If the miniſters of Neufchatel, the accuſers of M. Rouſſeau (67), had been born Athenians or Jews, they would, by virtue of being the ſtrongeſt, in like manner have perſecuted Socrates or Jeſus. Oh, eloquent Rouſſeau! regard the favour of the great prince who protects you againſt ſuch fanatics as a full recompence for their inſults! you muſt have bluſhed at the approbation of thoſe wretches; it would have inferred ſome analogy between your ideas and theirs, and have ſtained your talents. You were perſecuted in the name of the Divinity, but not by him.

Who more forcibly oppoſed intolerance than the Son of God? His apoſtles would have had him call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans; he reproved them ſharply. The apoſtles, ſtill animated with the ſpirit of the world, had not then received that of God; ſcarce were they enlightened when they became proſcribed, not proſcribers.

Heaven has given to no one the power to maſſacre a heretic. John does not command the Chriſtians to arm themſelves againſt the Pagans: (68) *Love one another*, he repeats inceſſantly, *for ſuch is the will of God; by obſerving this precept you fulfil the law.*

Nero, I know, perſecuted among the firſt Chriſtians men of a different opinion from his own; but Nero was a tyrant, horrible to humanity. They who commit the ſame barbarities, who violate without remorſe the natural and divine laws, which commands us *to do unto others as we would that they ſhould do unto us*, ought equally to be accurſed of God and man.

They who tolerate intolerants render themſelves guilty of their crimes. If a church complain of being perſecuted, when its right to perſecute is oppoſed, the prince ſhould be deaf to its complaints. The church ought to regulate its conduct by that of the Son of God. But Jeſus and his apoſtles left to men the free exerciſe of reaſon. Why then does the church forbid them the uſe of it?

No man has authority over the noble function of my mind, that of judging for myself, any more than over the air I breathe. Shall I abandon to others the care of thinking for me? I have my own conſcience, reaſon, and religion, and do not deſire to have the conſcience, reaſon, or religion of the pope. I will not model my belief after that of another, ſaid an archbiſhop of Canterbury. Each one is to anſwer for his own ſoul; it therefore belongs to each one to examine,

What he believes;

On what motive he believes;

What is the belief that appears to him the moſt rational.

What! ſaid John Gerſon, chancellor of the univerſity of Paris, has heaven given me a ſoul, a faculty of judging, and ſhall I ſubmit it to that of others; and ſhall they guide me in my manner of living and dying?

But ought a man to prefer his own reaſon to that of a nation? Is ſuch a preſumption lawful? Why not? If Jupiter ſhould again take in hand the balance with which he formerly weighed the deſtiny of nations, in one ſcale he ſhould put the opinion of Locke, Fontenelle, Bayle, &c. and in the other that of the Italian, French, and Spaniſh nations, the laſt ſcale would riſe up, as if loaded with no weight. The diverſity and abſurdity of

different

different forms of worſhip ſhew in how little eſteem we ought to hold the opinion of the people. The divine wiſdom itſelf appeared, ſays the ſcripture, a ſcandal to the Jews, and to the nations fooliſhneſs; *Judæis ſcandalum, gentibus ſtultitiam.* In matters of religion I owe no reſpect to the opinion of a people; it is to myſelf alone that I owe an account of my belief; all that immediately relates to God, ſhould have no judge but him. The magiſtrate himſelf, ſolely charged with the temporal happineſs of men, has no right to puniſh any crimes not committed againſt ſociety: no prince or prieſt has a right to perſecute in me the pretended crime of not thinking as he does.

From what principle does the law forbid my neighbour to diſpoſe of my property, and permit him to diſpoſe of my reaſon and my ſoul? My ſoul is my property. It is from nature that I hold the right of thinking, and of ſpeaking what I think. When the firſt Chriſtians laid before the nations of the earth their belief, and the motives for that belief; when they permitted the Gentiles to judge between the Chriſtian religion and their own, and to make uſe of the reaſon given to man to diſtinguiſh between vice and virtue, truth and falſhood; the expoſition of their ſentiments had certainly nothing criminal in it. At what period did the Chriſtians deſerve the hatred and contempt of the world? When by burning the temples of the idols, they would have forced the pagans to re-

linquiſh the religion they thought the beſt (69); What was the deſign of that violence? Force impoſes ſilence on reaſon; it can proſcribe any worſhip rendered the Divinity. But what power has it over belief? To believe ſuppoſes a motive to believe. Force is no motive. Now without motive we cannot really believe; the moſt we can do is to think we believe (70).

There can be no pretence for admitting an intolerance condemned by reaſon and the law of nature: that law is holy; it is from God; it cannot be diſannulled; on the contrary, God has confirmed it by his goſpel.

Every prieſt, who under the name of an angel of peace excites men to perſecution, is not, as is imagined, the dupe of a ſtupid and ill-informed zeal (71); it is not by his zeal but by his ambition he is directed.

CHAP. XX.

Intolerance is the foundation of the grandeur of the clergy.

THE doctrine and practice of the prieſt both prove his love of power. What does he protect? Ignorance. Why? Becauſe the ignorant are credulous, make little uſe of their reaſon, think after others, are eaſy to be deceived, and are the dupes of the groſſeſt ſophiſtry (72).

What

What does the prieſt perſecute? Learning. Why? Becauſe a man of learning will not believe without examination; he will ſee with his own eyes, and is hard to be deceived. The enemies of learning are the bonze, the dervis, the bramin, in ſhort, every prieſt of every religion. In Europe the prieſts roſe up againſt Galileo; excommunicated Polydore Virgil and Scheiner for the diſcovery the one made of the antipodes, and the other of the ſpots in the ſun; they have proſcribed ſound logic in Bayle, and in Deſcartes the only method of acquiring knowledge; they forced that philoſopher to leave his country (73); they formerly accuſed all great men of magic (74); and now magic is no longer in faſhion, they accuſe thoſe of atheiſm and materialiſm, whom they formerly burned as ſorcerers.

The care of the prieſt has ever been to keep men at a diſtance from the truth: all inſtructive ſtudy is forbid. The prieſt ſhuts himſelf up with them in a dark chamber, and carefully ſtops up every crevice by which the light might enter. He hates, and ever will hate, the philoſopher: he is in continual fear leſt men of ſcience ſhould overthrow an empire founded on error and intellectual darkneſs.

Without love for talents, the prieſt is a ſecret enemy to the virtues of humanity; he frequently denies their very exiſtence. There are, in his opinion, no virtuous actions but what are con-

formable to his doctrine, that is, to his intereſt. The firſt of virtues with him are faith, and a ſubmiſſion to ſacerdotal power: it is to ſlaves only that he gives the name of ſaints and virtuous men.

What, however, are more diſtinct than the ideas of virtue and ſanctity? He is virtuous who promotes the proſperity of his fellow-citizens; the word Virtue always includes the idea of ſome public utility. It is not the ſame with ſanctity. A hermit or monk impoſes on himſelf the law of ſilence, flogs himſelf every night, lives on pulſe and water, ſleeps on ſtraw, offers to God his naſtineſs and his ignorance, and thinks by virtue of maceration to make a fortune in Heaven. He may be decorated with a glory; but if he do no good on earth, he is not honeſt. A villain is converted at the hour of death; he is ſaved, and is happy: but he is not virtuous. That title is not to be obtaind but by a conduct habitually juſt and noble.

It is from the cloiſters they commonly take the ſaints; but what in general are monks? Idle and litigious men, dangerous to ſociety, and whoſe vicinity is to be dreaded. Their conduct proves that there is nothing in common between religion and virtue. To obtain a juſt idea of it, we muſt ſubſtitute a new morality in the place of that theological morality, which, always indulgent to the perfidious arts practiſed by the different ſects (76), ſanctifies to this day the atrocious crimes with

which

which the Janſeniſts and Moliniſts reciprocally charge each other (77), and which, in ſhort, commands them to plunder their fellow-citizens of their property and their liberty.

An Aſiatic tyrant would have his ſubjects promote his pleaſures with all their power, and pay down at his feet their homage and their riches: the popiſh prieſts exact in like manner the homage and the riches of the catholics.

Are there any means of increaſing their power and wealth that they have not employed? When it was neceſſary for that purpoſe to have recourſe to barbarity and cruelty, they became cruel and barbarous.

From the moment the prieſts, inſtructed by experience, found that men paid more regard to fear than to love, that more offerings were preſented to Ariman than Oromaza, to the cruel Molva than the gentle Jeſus, it was on terror they founded their empire. They ſought to have it in their power to burn the Jew, impriſon the Janſeniſt and Deiſt; and notwithſtanding the horror with which the tribunal of the inquiſition fills every ſenſible and humane ſoul, they then conceived the project of its eſtabliſhment. It was by dint of intrigues they accompliſhed this deſign in Spain, Italy, Portugal, &c.

The more arbitrary the proceedings of this tribunal became, the more it was dreaded. The prieſts, perceiving that the ſacerdotal power increaſed

creaſed by the terrors with which it ſtruck the imagination of mankind, ſoon became obdurate. The monk, deaf with impunity to the cry of compaſſion, to the tears of miſery, and the groans of tortures, ſpared neither virtue nor talents; it was by confiſcation of property, by the aid of tortures and butcheries, they at laſt uſurped over the people an authority ſuperior to that of the magiſtrates, and frequently even to that of kings. The bold hand of ſacerdotal ambition dared in a Chriſtian country to lay the foundation of ſuch a tribunal; and the ſtupidity of the people, and of princes, ſuffered it to be completed.

Are there no longer in the Catholic church a Fenelon or a Fitzjames, who, touched with the misfortunes of their brethren, behold this tribunal with horror? There are ſtill Janſeniſts virtuous enough to deteſt the inquiſition, even though it ſhould burn a Jeſuit; but in general men are not at once religious and tolerant: humanity ſuppoſes intelligence.

A man of an enlightened mind knows that force makes hypocrites, and perſuaſion Chriſtians; that a heretic is a brother who does not think as he does on certain metaphyſical dogmas; that this brother, deprived of the gift of faith, is to be pitied, not perſecuted (78); and that if no one can believe that to be true, which appears to him to be falſe, no human power can command belief.

The

The conſequence of religious intolerance is the miſery of nations. What ſanctifies intolerance? Sacerdotal ambition. The exceſſive love of the monk for power produces his exceſſive barbarity. The monk, cruel by ſyſtem, is ſtill more ſo by education. Weak, hypocrital, cowardly by ſituation, every Catholic prieſt ought in general to be atrocious (79); ſo that in countries ſubject to his power he exerciſes perpetually all that the moſt refined cruelty and injuſtice can imagine. If, while profeſſing a religion inſtituted to inſpire gentleneſs and charity, he become the inſtrument of perſecutions and maſſacres; if, all dropping with the blood ſpilt at an auto de fe, he dare at the altar to lift his murdering hands to Heaven, let no one wonder: the monk is as he ought to be. Covered with the blood of a heretic, he regards himſelf as the avenger of the divine wrath. But can he at ſuch a time implore the clemency of Heaven? Can his hands be pure becauſe the church has declared them ſo? What community has not legitimated the moſt abominable crimes, when they ſerved to increaſe its power?

The approbation of the church is ſufficient to ſanctify any crime. I have regarded the different religions, and have ſeen their ſeveral followers ſnatch the torch from each other's hands to burn their brethren; I have ſeen the ſeveral ſuperſtitions ſerve as footſtools to eccleſiaſtical pride. Who

is

is then, I have ſaid to myſelf, the truly impious? Is it the infidel? No: the ambitious fanatic (80). It is he that perſecutes and murders his brethren; it is he who, wiſhing to execute the vengeance of Heaven on the infernal regions, anticipates that horrid function on earth; who, regarding an infidel as a damned ſoul, is deſirous by a violent death to haſten his perdition, and by an unheard-of progreſſion of cruelty, to cauſe his brother to be at the ſame inſtant arreſted, impriſoned, judged, condemned, burned, and damned.

CHAP. XXI.

The impoſſibility of ſuppreſſing in man the ſentiment of intolerance. Means of counteracting its effects.

THE leaven of intolerance is indeſtructible. It is only practicable to ſuppreſs its increaſe and action. Severe laws ought therefore to be employed in reſtraining it, as they do robbery.

Does it regard perſonal intereſt? The magiſtrate, by preventing its action, will bind the hands of intolerance; and why ſhould they be unbound, when under the maſk of religion intolerance will exerciſe the greateſt cruelties?

Man is by nature intolerant. If the ſun of reaſon enlighten him for a moment, he ſhould ſeize the opportunity to bind himſelf down by ſagacious laws, and put himſelf in a happy ſtate of impotency,

tency, that he may not injure others if he ſhould be again ſeized with the rage of intolerance.

Good laws can equally reſtrain the furious devout, and the perfidious prieſt. England, Holland, and a part of Germany are proofs of this truth. Multiplied crimes and miſeries have opened the eyes of the people on this matter; they have perceived that liberty of thought is a natural right; that thinking produces a deſire of communicating our thoughts, and that in a people, as an individual, indifference in this matter is a ſign of ſtupidity.

He who does not feel the want of thought never thinks. It is with the body as with the mind; if the faculties of the one or the other are not exerted they become impotent. When intolerance has weighed down the minds of men, and has broken their ſpring, they then become ſtupid, and darkneſs is ſpread over a nation.

The touch of Midas, the poets ſay, turned all into gold; the head of Meduſa transformed all into ſtone: intolerance, in like manner, transforms into hypocrites, fools, and ideots (81), all that it finds within the ſphere of its attraction. It was intolerance that in the Eaſt ſcattered the firſt ſeeds of ſtupidity, which ſince the inſtitution of deſpotiſm have there ſprung up. It is intolerance that has condemned to the contempt of the preſent and future ages all thoſe ſuperſtitious countries

whoſe

whoſe inhabitants in fact appear to belong rather to the claſs of brutes than men.

There is only one caſe in which toleration can be detrimental to a people, and that is when it tolerates a religion that is intolerant, ſuch as the Catholic (82). This religion, becoming the moſt powerful in a ſtate, will always ſhed the blood of its ſtupid protectors; it is the ſerpent that ſtings the boſom which has warmed it. Let Germany beware! its princes have an intereſt in embracing popery; it affords them reſpectable eſtabliſhments for their brothers, children, &c. Theſe princes becoming Catholics would force the belief of their ſubjects, and if they found it neceſſary, would again make human blood to ſtream; the torch of ſuperſtition and intolerance would again blaze. A light breath would kindle it, and ſet all Europe in flames. Where would the conflagration ſtop? I know not. Would Holland eſcape? Would the Briton himſelf, from the height of his rocks, for any long time brave the Catholic fury? The ſtraits of the ſea would prove an impotent barrier againſt the rage of fanaticiſm. What could hinder the preaching up a new croiſade, and of arming all Europe againſt England, of making a deſcent in that country, and of one day treating the Britons as they formerly treated the Albigois.

Let not the inſinuating manner of the Catholics impoſe on the Proteſtants. The ſame prieſt who in Pruſſia regards intolerance as an abomination,

and

and an infraction of the natural and divine law, looks on toleration in France as a crime and a hereſy (83). What renders the ſame man ſo different in different countries? His weakneſs in Pruſſia, and his power in France.

When we conſider the conduct of Catholic Chriſtians, they at firſt, when feeble, appear to be lambs; but when ſtrong, they are tygers.

Will the nations, inſtructed by paſt misfortunes, never ſee the neceſſity of reſtraining fanaticiſm, and of baniſhing from every religion the monſtrous doctrine of intolerance? What is it at this hour that ſhakes the throne of Turky, and ravages Poland? Fanaticiſm. It is that prevents the Catholic Poles from admiting the Diſſidents to a partition of their privileges, and makes them prefer war to toleration. In vain do they impute the preſent miſeries of thoſe countries merely to the pride of the nobility; without religion the great men could never have armed the nation, and the impotence of their pride would have preſerved peace in their country. Popery has been the ſecret cauſe of the miſeries of Poland.

At Conſtantinople it is the fanaticiſm of the Muſſulmans, that by loading the Greek Chriſtians with ignominy, has armed it in ſecret againſt the empire it ought to have defended.

Would to Heaven that theſe two examples now before us, and glaring with the evils produced by religious intolerance, may be the laſt of the kind; and

and that hereafter, indifferent to all modes of worſhip, governments may judge men by their actions, and not by their opinions. That they may regard virtue and genius as the only recommendations to public favour; and be convinced that it is not of a Romiſh, Turkiſh, or Reformed mechanic, but of the moſt accompliſhed workman we ſhould purchaſe a watch: in ſhort, that it is not to the extent of faith, but that of talents, offices ought to be intruſted.

As long as the doctrine of intolerance ſubſiſts, the moral world will contain within its boſom the ſeeds of new calamities. It is a volcano half extinguiſhed, that may one day blaze forth with greater violence, and produce freſh conflagrations and deſtruction.

Such are the fears of a citizen, who, the ſincere friend of mankind, earneſtly wiſhes their happineſs.

I think I have ſufficiently proved in this ſection, that in general all the factitious paſſions, and in particular civil and religious intolerance, are nothing more in man than a diſguiſed love of power. The long detail into which the proofs of this truth has led me, has doubtleſs made the reader forget the motives that forced me into this diſcuſſion.

My object was to ſhew, that if in man all the paſſions above cited be factitious, all men are in conſequence ſuſceptible of them. To make this truth

truth ſtill more evident, I ſhall here preſent him with the genealogy of the paſſions.

CHAP. XXII.

The genealogy of the paſſions.

MAN is animated by a principle of life, which is corporeal ſenſibility: this ſenſibility is produced in us by a love of pleaſure and a hatred for pain: it is from thoſe two ſentiments united in man, and always preſent to his mind, that is formed what we call the paſſion of ſelf-love (84). The love of ſelf produces the deſire of happineſs, the deſire of happineſs that of power, and the love of power gives birth to envy, avarice, ambition, and in general all thoſe factitious paſſions * (85), that under various denominations are nothing more in us than a love of power diſguiſed, and applied to the ſeveral means of attaining it.

* *Paſſions, like elements, tho' born to fight,*
Yet, mixed and ſoftened, in his work unite
Love, hope, and joy, fair Pleaſure's ſmiling train,
Hate, fear, and grief, the family of Pain;
Theſe mixed with art, and to due bounds confined,
Make and maintain the ballance of the mind:
The lights and ſhades, whoſe well accorded ſtrife
Gives all the ſtrength and colour of our life.

POPE.

Theſe means being different, we ſee man, according to his ſituation or the form of government under which he is placed, advance to power by the path of riches, intrigue, ambition, glory, talents, &c. but conſtantly direct his ſteps toward it.

If we here recollect what is ſaid in the ſecond, third, and fourth ſections of this work, which is,

1. That all men have an equal aptitude to underſtanding.

2. That this equal aptitude is a dead power in them, when not vivified by the paſſions.

3. That the paſſion of glory is that which moſt commonly ſets them in action.

4. That all men are ſuſceptible of it in countries where glory conducts to power.

The general concluſion I draw from hence is, that all men organiſed in the common manner may be animated by the ſort of paſſion proper to elevate them to the higheſt truths.

The only objection that remains for me to anſwer is the following. All men, they will ſay, may love glory (86), but can this paſſion be carried by each of them to a degree of force ſufficient to put in action the equal aptitude they have to underſtanding?

To reſolve this queſtion, I will ſuppoſe that I have concentered all my happineſs in the poſſeſſion of glory; this paſſion being then as lively in me as the love of myſelf, will neceſſarily be confounded

founded in me with that ſentiment. It is required therefore to prove, that the paſſion of ſelf-love, common to all men, is the ſame in all; and that it may at leaſt endow them all with that energy and force of attention that is requiſite to the acquiring the greateſt ideas.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the force of the ſentiment of ſelf-love.

THE ſentiment of ſelf-love, differently modified in different men, is eſſentially the ſame in all. This ſentiment is independent of the greater or leſs perfection of the organs. A man may be deaf, blind, lame, and infirm, and yet have the ſame ſolicitude for his preſervation, the ſame averſion to pain, and the ſame love for pleaſure.

Neither the force nor weakneſs of temperament, nor the perfection of the organs, augment or diminiſh in us the force of the ſentiment of ſelf-love. Women have no leſs love for themſelves than men, and yet have not the ſame organiſation. If there were a way to meaſure the force of this ſentiment, it ſhould be by its *conſtancy*, its *unity*, and if I may ſo ſay, its *habitual preſence*; now in all theſe reſpects the ſentiment of ſelf-love is the ſame in all men.

It is this ſentiment that ſometimes arms men with an obſtinate courage, as with a ſword, to triumph over the greateſt obſtacles, and that ſometimes gives them a prudent fear, as a ſhield, to avoid danger; in a word, it is this ſentiment that, always buſied in promoting the happineſs of each individual, watches inceſſantly over his preſervation. Now if the love of ſelf be in this reſpect the ſame in all, all are therefore ſuſceptible of the ſame degree of paſſion, and conſequently of the degree proper to put in action the equal aptitude they have to underſtanding. But admitting, for a moment, that the ſentiment of ſelf-love acts not ſo ſtrongly in one as in another: it is certain that this difference, not yet perceived by experience, muſt be conſequently very ſmall, and that it can have no influence on the mind.

A mechanician turns aſide no more of a river than is neceſſary to move the wheels and the machinery placed on its banks; he lets the reſt of the water run into the ſea. In like manner it is not neceſſary to turn aſide any more of the whole ſentiment of ſelf-love than the part neceſſary to put in action the equal aptitude all men have to underſtanding. Now this portion is conſiderably leſs than is imagined. If we conſult experience in this matter, it will teach us that the fear of the rod, or a puniſhment ſtill more ſlight, is ſufficient to endow a child with the attention neceſſary for attaining of languages (87). Now this ſort of

attention is either the moſt, or at leaſt one of the moſt laborious and fatiguing of all others *.

Experience teaches us alſo that all our diſcoveries are the gifts of chance; that we owe to chance the firſt hint of every new truth; that all truths of this ſort are, ſo to ſay, catched without attention; that their diſcovery, for this reaſon, has always been regarded as an inſpiration, and conſequently that there is no poet or philoſopher whom the harmony, brilliancy, perſpicuity, and preciſion of expreſſion, have not coſt more time and pains than his moſt happy ideas.

From whence it reſults, that all men organiſed in the common manner are ſuſceptible of the degree of attention requiſite for raiſing themſelves to the higheſt truths, and that on the hypotheſis that the ſentiment of ſelf-love is not the ſame in all men, (an hypotheſis doubtleſs impoſſible,) the ſmall difference that is found in this reſpect among them, cannot have any influence on their underſtandings.

In fact, if we ſuppoſe ſelf-love to be ſtronger in ſome than in others, yet this paſſion, as experience proves, will not be leſs equally habitual in

* If the ſtudy of their native tongue appear in general leſs laborious to children than the ſtudy of geometry, it is becauſe children find more habitually the neceſſity of talking, than of comparing geometric figures; and the perception of the neceſſity of attention renders it continually leſs diſagreeable and laborious.

them. Now if all ſuperiority of underſtanding * depends leſs on a lively than an habitual attention, it is evident on this ſuppoſition, all men muſt be ſtill endowed with the degree of paſſion proper to put in action the equal aptitude they have to underſtanding.

* When I mention the underſtanding or judgment, the reader, clearly to conceive my ideas, ſhould recollect that the underſtanding is the produce of the attention, and the attention that of any paſſion whatever, but eſpecially of glory. In vain does chance or education offer us, in reading, converſation, &c. objects of compariſon from which new ideas might reſult; thoſe objects will be to us barren ſeeds, if attention do not render them fertile, that is, if we have not an intereſt, a lively deſire, to compare them, and obſerve the reſemblances and differences, the agreements and diſagreements thoſe objects have with each other and with us.

If they frequently ſay of a great man that he is the child of misfortune, it is becauſe in general being continually forced to ſtrive with adverſity, a man becomes more thoughtful and acute; he is therefore always what his ſituation makes him. But is adverſity ſo ſalutary as ſuppoſed? Yes: in the prime of life, when a habit of thinking and reflecting may be yet acquired. That age paſſed, misfortune afflicts a man but affords him little information. *Adverſity*, ſays the Scotch proverb, *is wholeſome at breakfaſt, indifferent at dinner, and mortal at ſupper.* Beſide, adverſity frequently excites in us only a lively and momentaneous effervescence, that is often tranſient. A paſſion for glory is more durable, and for that reaſon more proper to produce great men and form great talents.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

The diſcovery of great ideas is the effect of conſtant attention.

A Vehement deſire frequently occaſions an effort of the mind more lively than laſting. Now the acquiſition of great talents ſuppoſes an obſtinate application, and a deſire of inſtruction more habitual than vehement.

However engaged people of the world may be with their fortune and their pleaſure, they feel by intervals the deſire of glory. But why does this deſire prove fruitleſs to them? Becauſe it is not ſufficiently durable. It is to the conſtancy of deſires that great ſucceſs is annexed. If an Agnes always deceives an Arnolph, it is becauſe the deſire of a woman to meet a lover is always more habitual than the deſire of preventing it is in thoſe that watch over her.

The inhabitants of Kamſchatka are in ſome things of an unequalled ſtupidity; in others they have a marvellous induſtry. In the making of cloths, ſays their hiſtorian, they ſurpaſs the Europeans *. Why? Becauſe, inhabiting one of

* If the inhabitants of Kamſchatka ſurpaſs us in certain acts, they may equal us in all. Talents are nothing more than different applications of the ſame underſtanding to different ſubjects.

the moſt inclement climates of the earth, they are moſt habitually ſenſible of the want of covering. Now an habitual want always produces induſtry. A man who is ſenſible of the value of conſideration, that it procures power, (the common object of the deſire of men), will do his utmoſt to attain it. It is in the poſſeſſion of that eſteem he centres all his happineſs, and it is then the deſire of glory is identified with the love of ourſelves. Now this laſt ſentiment, as is proved by experience, being habitually preſent to all men, ought to endow them with that ſort of attention to which the ſuperiority of the underſtanding is annexed.

All men organiſed in the common manner are therefore ſuſceptible not only of paſſions, but of the habitual degree of paſſions, ſufficient to elevate them to the higheſt ideas.

From whence then proceeds the extreme inequality of underſtandings? Becauſe nobody ſees preciſely (88) the ſame objects; nor is preciſely in the ſame ſituation (89); nor has received the ſame education; and becauſe, finally, chance, that preſides over our inſtruction, does not conduct all men to mines equally rich and fruitful.

He that can lift a pound of feathers or wool, can lift a pound of iron or lead. The difference therefore perceived between the induſtry of the inhabitants of Kamſchatka and ours, ariſes from the different wants that a ſavage or poliſhed nation muſt ſee in different climates.

It

It is therefore to education, taken in its fulleſt extent we can underſtand the term, and in which the idea of chance is alſo included *, that we are to refer the inequality of underſtandings.

To complete the proofs of this truth, it only remains for me to ſhew, in the following ſection, the errors and contradictions into which they fall, who on the ſame ſubject adopt principles different from mine.

I ſhall take M. Rouſſeau for an example. He is of all others the writer who in his works has treated this queſtion with the moſt acute[illegible]s and eloquence. I ſhall therefore diſcuſs his principal opinions; and if I demonſtrate their falſity and contradiction, I imagine that the public then leſs

* Becauſe chance has always a part in our inſtruction, are we from thence to infer the inutility of education? No: education will never make all the inhabitants of a nation men of ſuperior underſtanding; but by improving it, by inventing new means of exciting in us the deſire of glory, and putting men frequently in ſituations where chance places them rarely, there is no doubt but its empire may be greatly contracted.

There are in Rome conſervatories or ſchools of muſic, from whence conſtantly iſſue good muſicians, and in which are every year formed ſome men of genius. At Paris there is alſo a ſchool for bridges and public roads that produces intelligent artiſts, among whom are found ſome men of ſuperior talents.

An excellent education may therefore increaſe the talents of a nation, and may make of the meaneſt of the people men of ſenſe and intelligence. Now thoſe advantages of an improved education are ſufficient to encourage men to the ſtudy of a ſcience, the perfection of which is in part connected with the happineſs of humanity.

attached

attached to its ancient prejudices, will judge of my principles without partiality, and will find itſelf in that calm and happy diſpoſition that makes men adopt every juſt idea, however paradoxical it may at firſt appear.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (page 272.) SOME have regarded the impetuoſity of attack in a battle, as one of the characteriſtics of the French: but this impetuoſity they have in common with the Turks, and in general with all nations not accuſtomed to a ſevere diſcipline. The French, however, are ſuſceptible of it. The king of Pruſſia has ſome of them in his army, and all are there exerciſed in the Pruſſian manner.

2. (p. 273.) The words loyal and poliſhed are not the ſame. A people of ſlaves may be poliſhed. The habit of fear will make them reverential. Such a people are often more civil, and always leſs loyal, than one that is free. The merchants of all nations atteſt the loyalty of the Engliſh traders. The man that is free, is in general a man of probity.

3. (ibid.) In a degraded nation, we do not find, even among the firſt of the citizens, characters of a certain elevation. Free and bold ſpirits would be there too diſcordant from the others.

4. (p. 274.) Who, in the Eaſt, is the man the moſt extolled? The greateſt tyrant: he is the man moſt feared and moſt deteſted. This tyrant, ſo much praiſed while living, may, therefore, always think himſelf the idol and delight of his people. If hiſtory draw his portrait truly, it muſt be a long time after his death. What method then has an Eaſtern monarch to know, if he really carries with him to the tomb the eſteem and regret of his ſubjects? He has but one: which is to reflect within himſelf, and examine, if he be always employed in promoting the happineſs of his people, and if in all his actions he have never conſulted any thing but the national intereſt. Has he been always indifferent about it? He may reſt aſſured, whatever eulogy they give him, that his name will be deſpiſed by poſterity. Death is the lance of Ithuriel; it deſtroys the charm of falſhood and flattery.

Diſgrace operates in the ſame manner on a vizir, as death does on a ſultan. While the former is in place, there are no eulogies with which he is not loaded, no talents that were not aſcribed

aſcribed to him: but when diſcharged, he is, as he was before his elevation, frequently one of the meaneſt of the people.

5. (p. 274.) Can an arbitrary monarch, always regardleſs of his foreign enemies, flatter himſelf that a people habituated to tremble at the ſcourge of his power, and baſe enough tamely to ſuffer themſelves to be plundered of their property, their lives, and their liberty, will defend him againſt the attack of a powerful enemy? A monarch ought to know, that in dividing the chain which unites the intereſt of each individual, with the general intereſt, he deſtroys all virtue, and that the virtue of an empire once deſtroyed, it precipitates into ruin. That the props of a deſpotic throne muſt ſink under its weight. That merely ſtrong in the ſtrength of his army, that army defeated, his ſubjects, freed from their fears, will no longer fight for him. That two or three battles have in the Eaſt decided the fate of the greateſt empires. Witneſs Darius, Tigranes, and Antiochus. The Romans fought four hundred years to ſubjugate Italy, when free, but to conquer ſervile Aſia they only preſented themſelves before it.

6. (p. 275.) The deſpot, for his glory and his ſecurity, ought to regard thoſe very philoſophers he hates, as his friends, and thoſe courtiers whom he cheriſhes, and whoſe vile flatteries of his vices excite him to crimes that lead on to his perdition, as his enemies.

7. (p. 276.) By what ſign do we diſtinguiſh an arbitrary power from a legitimate? Both make laws; both inflict capital or leſſer puniſhments on the violators of thoſe laws. Both employ the power of the community, that is, the power of the nation, to maintain their edicts, or repel the attack of an enemy. True: but they differ, ſays Locke, in this; the firſt employs the public authority to gratify his caprice or enſlave the inhabitants, and the other employs it to render himſelf reſpectable to his neighbours, to ſecure to the inhabitants their property, their laws, and their liberty. In ſhort, the employing the national force to any other purpoſe than the general welfare is a crime. It is therefore the different manner of employing the national force that diſtinguiſhes the arbitrary power from the legitimate.

8. (ibid.) Deſpotiſm appeared in ſuch a light to the virtuous Tullius, the ſeventh king of Rome, that he had the courage to fix himſelf the bounds to royal authority.

9. (p. 277.)

9. (p. 277.) Among the various cauſes of the little ſucceſs of France, in the laſt war, when we reckon the jealouſy and inexperience of the generals, and their indifference for the public welfare, perhaps we ſhould not forget the gangrene of religious ſlavery, which began at that time to ſpread itſelf over all minds. The Frenchman now no longer dares to think for himſelf. From day to day, he thinks leſs, and will, from day to day, becomes leſs reſpectable.

10. (p. 282.) The love of power is ſuch, that in England itſelf there is ſcarce a miniſter who would not inveſt his prince with arbitrary power. The intoxication of a great place, makes the miniſter forget, that weighed down by the power he erects, he and his poſterity will perhaps be its firſt victims.

Why do men ſeek great employments? Is it from a deſire of doing good? He that is not animated by this motive, muſt regard them as burdens. When men deſire them, it is leſs for public utility than their own. Men are not, therefore, born ſo good as ſome pretend. Goodneſs ſuppoſes a love for others, and it is in ourſelves only we center all our love.

11. (ibid.) The deſire of power is general, and if to obtain it all men do not expoſe themſelves to the ſame dangers, it is becauſe the love of ſelf-preſervation is in the greateſt part of them an equipoiſe to their love of power.

12. (p. 283.) In almoſt every country, force is preferred to juſtice. In France, they make the advocate pay taxes, but not the lieutenant. Why? Becauſe one is to a certain degree the repreſentative of juſtice, and the other of power.

13. (p. 285.) Who are the enemies of an illuſtrious man? His rivals, and almoſt all his cotemporaries. His preſence humbles them. By whom is he praiſed? By the ſtranger; he is without envy: he makes a part of living poſterity: the diſtance of place equals that of time. The approbation of ſtrangers is to a man of letters almoſt the only recompence that he can now expect.

14. (p. 290.) When we are inwardly conſtrained to acknowledge another to have a ſuperior underſtanding, we hate him; his preſence is diſguſtful: we would be revenged and get rid of him: for that purpoſe we force him to leave his country, like Deſcartes, Bayle, Maupertuis, &c. or we perſecute him like Monteſquieu, Diderot, &c.

There

There is no great man, they ſay, in the ſight of his wife, or his valet de chambre. I well believe it. How can we continually live with a man we are too often forced to admire? In this caſe, we muſt either leave him, or ceaſe to eſteem him. Riches and dignities may for a time impoſe ſilence on envy; but then it is ſecretly irritated. We are unwilling that a man already our ſuperior by birth and dignity, ſhould alſo excel us in talents. Does a man write like Frederic? We ridicule in him the talent for writing which we admire in Cæſar, Cicero, &c. we ſee him with regret eſtabliſh his merit by a good work. But is not his converſation alone ſufficient to prove his genius? No; in converſation the ideas ſucceed ſo rapidly, that we have not time to conſider them in every light, nor to ſee their propriety; beſide, the tone and geſture of the ſpeaker, and the diſpoſition of the hearer, may all help to impoſe on us. We may therefore always diſpute a merit of this ſort; we do, and conſole ourſelves by it.

Perhaps to be loved we ſhould merit but little eſteem; all ſuperiority attracts awe and averſion. Why does affability render merit ſupportable? Becauſe it makes a man in ſome degree deſpicable.

A reſerved merit gives at once a diſpoſition to reſpect and hatred, and an affable merit a diſpoſition to love and contempt. He who would be careſſed by thoſe that ſurround him ſhould be content with little eſteem. We pardon merit by forgetting it. Great talents have ſome admirers and few friends. The ſecret and general deſire of the majority is not that genius exalt itſelf, but that folly be extended.

15. (p. 290.) From what motive do men purchaſe ſatiric pamphlets? From the ſcandal they caſt on great men, and the praiſes they give to thoſe of little ability. Human nature is not changed in this reſpect. If the Athenians, ſays Plutarch, ſo haſtily advanced young Cymon to the higheſt offices, it was to mortify Themiſtocles; they were tired of eſteeming the ſame man ſo long together. Why do we extol to exceſs riſing talents? Frequently to depreſs thoſe already in eſteem. When we penetrate, ſays Plutarch, profoundly into the human heart, and ſee its principal motives, we find that the deſire of obliging one man ariſes leſs from the pleaſure of ſerving him, than the gratification of envy in depreciating another.

16. (p. 291.) Fathers in general, though honeſt, yet ignorant, ſee with impatience their ſons frequent the company of men of letters,

letters, and give their company the preference to all others: their paternal pride is thereby mortified.

17. (p. 291.) If, as they ſay, letters and philoſophy be in France without protectors, we may, without the ſpirit of prophecy, affirm that the ſucceeding generation will be without learning or genius; and that of all the arts, thoſe of luxury will alone be cultivated.

18. (p. 292.) Violence and perſecution are in general proportioned to the merit of the perſecuted. In every country illuſtrious men have undergone diſgrace. It is ſcarce one hundrad and fifty years ſince a man in England could not have been with impunity a great man.

19. (ibid.) Few authors think for themſelves. The greateſt part of books are made after other books; yet he that has not a manner of his own, ought not to expect eſteem from poſterity.

20. (ibid.) Formerly all men bowed down before the ancients, and whoever in ſecret preferred Taſſo to Virgil or Homer never owned it. What reaſon however have we for concealing our opinion, when we do not give it as a law? What better than the diverſity of opinions, can improve the taſte of the public?

21. (ibid.) When princes or magiſtrates regard the opinion of poſterity, they commonly merit its eſteem; they will be juſt in their edicts and their ſentences. It is the ſame with authors. When a writer has poſterity preſent to his mind, his manner of comparing objects becomes great; he diſcovers important truths, and he ſecures to himſelf the general eſteem, becauſe he writes for men of all ages and all countries.

22. (p. 293.) The theological libel intitled the Cenſure of Beliſarius, excites horror by the barbarity and cruelty of its aſſertions: it always recalls to my mind that fine verſe of Racine.

Eh quoi, Mathan! d'un prêtre eſt-ce là le langage?
What, Mathan! is this the language of a prieſt?

23. (ibid.) The citizens to whom we owe the greateſt reſpect are, firſt, thoſe generals and miniſters whoſe valour or ſagacity have ſecured the grandeur or felicity of empires. The next moſt uſeful citizens are ſuch as improve the arts and ſciences, that ſupply the wants of men, or preſerve them from diſ-

content

content. Why then do we ſhew more reſpect to a man of wealth or power than to a great mathematician, poet, or philoſopher? Becauſe our firſt reſpect is for a power or poſſeſſion to which we conſtantly join the idea of happineſs and pleaſure.

Power is the idol of youth, and even of thoſe of maturer age; ſo long as they can twine the myrtles with their laurels.

If power be ſometimes diſdained by age, it is becauſe it no longer affords its former advantage.

24. (p. 297.) It is at the period that men, by increaſing, are forced to manure the earth, that they perceive the neceſſity of ſecuring to the labourer his harveſt, and the property of the land he cultivates. Before cultivation it is no wonder that the ſtrongeſt ſhould think he has as much right over a piece of barren ground as the firſt occupier.

25. (ibid.) A reſiſtance to him who is poſſeſſed of power is reputed ſedition and a crime even in poliſhed nations. No proof of this can be more clear than the complaint an Engliſh merchant made to the houſe of commons: "Gentlemen, ſaid "he, you can never imagine how perfidiouſly the negroes treat "us; their wickedneſs is ſo great, that on ſome of the coaſts of "Africa they prefer death to ſlavery. When we have bought "them, they ſtab themſelves, or plunge into the ſea; which "is ſo much loſs to the purchaſers. Judge by this action of "the perverſity of that abominable race."

26. (p. 299.) At what time do a people violate the law of nation? When they can do it with impunity. Rome while weak was equitable and virtuous: when it had conquered Macedonia no nation could reſiſt it: then become more ſtrong it ceaſed to be juſt. Its inhabitants were from that time without honour, and without faith. The powerful are always unjuſt. Juſtice between nations is conſtantly founded on a reciprocal fear, and from hence that political axiom: *If you deſire peace, prepare for war. Si vis pacem, para bellum.*

27. (p. 301.) Ariſtotle places robbery among the different kinds of hunting; and Solon, among the ſeveral profeſſions, reckons that of theft: he obſerves only that we ſhould not rob either our fellow-citizens, or the allies of our republic. Rome, under the firſt of her kings, was a den of robbers. The Germans, ſays Cæſar, regard devaſtation and pillage as the only exerciſe

exercise proper for youth; and the only one that can keep them from idleness, and make them finished men.

28 (p. 301) There is, they say, a law of nations between the English, French, Germans, Italians, &c. I believe it. The fear of reprisals will establish it among nations of a force nearly equal; but when they are freed from that fear, and have to do with a savage people, from that moment the law of nations appears to them nothing more than a chimera.

Is it for the Christians to talk of the law of nations, the law of nature and of virtue? They, who without any injury received from the Indians of the East, invade their coasts, lay waste their cities, and drive out the inhabitants. They, who with their European merchandize carry to the African towns a spirit of discord, and availing themselves of the wars they have kindled, purchase the vanquished for slaves. They, who without offence, or even the appearance of offence on the part of the western Indians, landed in America, destroyed the palaces of Montezuma and the Incas, massacred their subjects, and seized on their dominions, without regard to the law, *prime occupanti*.

The church boasts of causing treasures that have been stole to be restored; but has it caused to be restored to their legal proprietors the empires of Mexico and Peru? Has it not on the contrary, in concert with princes, pillaged the new world? Has it not enriched itself with the spoils, and by its conduct brought into contempt those precepts of the natural law, which it says are engraved on every heart by the hand of God?

What can be more absurd and pitiful than the morality of the church? If a prince take a mistress, it is in their opinion a matter of indifference, if she do not oppose the projects of the church, for then the priests cry aloud against the impiety. But if the same prince carry war and devastation among a people that have not offended him, if he cause 300,000 men to perish in an expedition, and bow down his people with taxes, the priests are silent. Curious morality this of the catholic church!

29 (p. 302.) Men love justice, they say; but the magistrates are the instruments of justice, and charged by the state to administer it; they therefore ought, above all, to protect innocence. But do they in reality protect it? A criminal cause is conducted in two different manners in Spain and in England;

that in which an advocate is given to the accuſed, and where his trial is conducted in a public manner, is without doubt that where innocence is moſt protected againſt the corruption and partiality of the judges, and conſequently the beſt. Why then is it not adopted? Why do not the magiſtrates ſolicit its admiſſion? Becauſe they imagine that the more arbitrary their ſentences are, the more fear they will inſpire, and the more authority they will have over the people. The ſo much boaſted love of equity is not therefore either natural or common to men. Now how can we call them the friends of humanity, when they are not even friends to juſtice?

30. (p. 302.) The idea of happineſs is ſo cloſely connected in the mind with that of power, that they are not without difficulty ſeparated. We reſpect even the appearance of power: it is to this ſentiment that we owe perhaps a certain admiration of ſuicide. We imagine him to be poſſeſſed of great power who can ſo deſpiſe life as to put himſelf to death. To what cauſe but the love of power can we attribute the exceſſive hatred of ſagacious women for men of a certain inclination? Alexander, Socrates, Solon, and Catinat* were heroes, faithful friends, and worthy citizens: a man may therefore have this inclination, and be uſeful to his family and his country. From whence then proceeds the horror of women for men ſuſpected of it? Becauſe they have leſs power over them. Now this defect of power is to them inſupportable; they are ſo many ſlaves to it, at leaſt in their empire, men of this ſort are therefore guilty of a crime that death alone can expiate.

31. (ibid.) It is power that makes one monarch reſpectable to another. While Philip II. was buſied in his cloſet, he called for a ſervant, and nobody came; his fool laughed: What do you laugh at? ſaid the king: To think of the awe and fear in which you hold all Europe, and of the contempt in which they would hold you if you were not powerful, and the reſt of your ſubjects did not ſerve you better than your domeſtics.

* *That thoſe men were really addicted to this perverſe inclination ſeems to be mere conjecture; it was doubtleſs very common in Greece, and therefore every ancient Greek is ſuppoſed to have been infected with it: juſt as we ſuppoſe every Dutchman to be a lover of money, and every Frenchman fond of gallantry.* 32. (p. 302.)

32. (p. 303.) Princes rarely feel the enthuſiaſm of equity: few among them are animated with a noble love of humanity. In all antiquity Gelon alone affords an example of it. He held human ſacrifices in horror; he carried the war into Africa, and obliged the vanquiſhed Carthagenians to aboliſh that deteſtable cuſtom. Catherine, in like manner, armed to force the Poles to toleration. Of all wars thoſe two perhaps have been alone undertaken for the happineſs of nations. Gelon and Catherine II. will therefore, in this reſpect, divide the eſteem of poſterity. If we would judge of the merit of ſovereigns, we ſhould do it, not by the little broils that may ariſe in their families, but by the great benefits they have done, or would have done to mankind. The deſire of doing good is rare among them. The only time at which the public good commonly operates is that when the intereſt of the prince coincides with that of the people. At what periods have the kings of France promoted the liberty of their ſubjects, and weakened the feudal power? When the haughty vaſſals of the crown equalled themſelves with their ſovereigns; then the ambition of the monarchs gave freedom to the people.

Let not the princes of the Eaſt boaſt of their love of equity. He that would make brutes of his ſubjects cannot love them. It is a folly to imagine the people would be then more docile and eaſy to govern. The more enlightened a nation is, the more readily it ſubmits to the juſt demands of an equitable adminiſtration. He that would blind his ſubjects, would be unjuſt with impunity. Such in general are men, and yet they dare to call themſelves the friends of juſtice. O ſelf-ignorance and hypocriſy!

33. (ibid.) Are there, as they ſay, men who ſacrifice their deareſt intereſt to juſtice? No: but there are, who hold nothing dearer than juſtice. This generous ſentiment is in them the effect of an excellent education. By what method can this principle be engraved on every heart? By preſenting on one hand, the unjuſt man as baſe, deſpiſed, and conſequently impotent; and on the other hand, the juſt man as eſteemed, honoured, and conſequently powerful.

When the idea of juſtice is by theſe means connected in the mind with thoſe of power and happineſs, they will be confounded, and form but one; and when we have a habit of recalling them together, it will ſoon become impoſſible to divide them.

This habit once contracted, we ſhall be proud of appearing juſt and virtuous; and then there is nothing we ſhall not ſacrifice to that noble pride.

It is thus the love of power and importance begets the love of juſtice. This laſt love, it is true, is a ſtranger to man; that of power, on the contrary, is natural to him; it is common to all, to the honeſt man and the knave, the ſavage and the poliſhed citizen.

The love of power is the immediate effect of corporeal ſenſibility, and the deſire of juſtice is the effect of inſtruction; conſequently, it is on the ſagacity of the laws that depends the virtue of a people. How many virtuous men are there among a people where juſtice is reſpected, that would be unjuſt among a ferocious nation, where equity is regarded as weakneſs and cowardice? Men therefore do not love equity for itſelf. This queſtion has been at all times decided by the conduct and manners of all nations, and all deſpots.

34. (p. 307.) Under a feudal government who are the tyrants? The lords. Tyrants therefore, they will ſay, are more numerous here than under a deſpotic government: I doubt it. The ſultan has under him vizirs, pachas, beys, receivers and directors of taxes, with an infinity of underlings and ſub-tyrants, who are ſtill more indifferent to the happineſs of the vaſſals than the proprietors.

35. (p. 312.) In England, if iniquity in a great man be deſpiſed by low people, it is becauſe thoſe people, being protected by the law, have nothing to fear from the great. If in every other country the vices of the great be on the contrary reſpected, it is becauſe vice is there armed with power, and power we can abhor and not deſpiſe.

36. (p. 314.) Attila, as well as Thamas, gloried in being the ſcourge of the Almighty.

37. (ibid.) Seditious and rebellious are the injurious titles the powerful oppreſſor gives to the impotent oppreſſed.

38. (ibid.) In every empire where the momentary deſire of a prince is a law, all the laws are contradictory, and there are no appearances of moral principles, either in the governors or thoſe that are governed.

39. (p. 317.) Contempt is the portion of weakneſs. This is perhaps the only truth of which princes are not ignorant. If a monarch loſe a province or a town, he appears deſpicable even

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in his own eyes: but if he unjuſtly take a town or province from his neighbour, he thinks himſelf reſpectable. He has always ſeen injuſtice honoured in the potent, and the world remain ſilent before power.

40. (p. 317.) The ſtrong and wicked, ſays an Engliſh poet, fear thoſe only that are ſtronger and worſe than themſelves; but the juſt and virtuous ought to fear all men; he has all his fellow-citizens, even his very friends, for perſecutors; all attack him. His virtue frees them from the fear of revenge. Humanity in him is equal to weakneſs in others; and under a vicious government, the good and weak are born victims to the wicked and ſtrong.

41. (p. 320.) An Engliſh nobleman landed in Italy, ran over the country about Rome, and embarked haſtily for England. Why, they ſaid, do you quit this fine country? "I can no "longer bear to ſee, he ſaid, the wretched looks of the Roman "peaſants; their miſery torments me; they have not even a "human aſpect." This nobleman perhaps exaggerated; but he did not falſify.

42. (ibid.) The murder of Clytus was the diſgrace of Alexander, and the puniſhment of the Dutch gazetteer that of the French miniſter. The crime of thoſe two unfortunate men was the ſame; they were both imprudent enough to ſpeak the truth. In the laſt century mankind were enraged at the treatment given the gazetteer. There are ages ſtill more baſe, when the puniſhment of a man of veracity is applauded.

43. (ibid.) When we are concerned for this gazetteer, and compare his crime with his puniſhment, we ſeem to be tranſported to the dominion of the ſultan of the Indies, who hanged his viſir for having put three grains of pepper into a cream tart. The illuſtrious, but unfortunate, M. Chalotais was very near ſuffering the ſame fate, for having, in like manner, put three grains of ſalt into a letter, wrote, they ſay, to a comptroller-general.

44. (p. 321.) In France, why do they not dare to exhibit the futility of the great on the ſtage? Becauſe, they ſay, comedies of that ſort would produce little reformation: it is true. The poet who flatters himſelf with correcting the frivolity of the French by a ridiculous portrait is deceived. There is no filling the veſſels of the Danaides. Men of ſound ſenſe are not to be formed under a government where prieſts and wo-

men have a powerful influence. A light and trifling ſpirit can alone be there cultivated; for it is that only which leads to fortune.

45. (p. 321.) It is not to his genius, but conſtantly to ſome particular event, that a man of talents owes the protection of the ignorant. If the ugly ſeek the company of the blind, ignorance flies that of the ſharp-ſighted.

46. (ibid.) An ignorant viſir always views with an evil eye the man who travels into the countries of learned people and wiſe princes. The viſir fears that the traveller on his return ſhould deſpiſe him: an enemy to men of ability, he boaſts of his contempt for them, and it is by this contempt the ſtranger judges him. Great miniſters and great princes have always been protectors of letters; witneſs the prince of Brunſwick, Catherine II. Prince Henry of Pruſſia, &c.

47. (ibid.) It was formerly the privilege of fools to ſometimes ſpeak the truth to princes; but ſtill with what caution and at what moments! Let us imitate, ſays one of them, the prudence of the cats; they do not think themſelves ſecure in an apartment till they have ſmelled to every corner of it.

48. (p. 322.) It is to the liberty the Engliſh and Dutch ſtill enjoy that Europe owes the little of it that ſtill remains. Except them there is ſcarce any nation that does not groan under the yoke of ignorance and deſpotiſm. Every virtuous man, every good citizen, ſhould thereſore intereſt himſelf in the liberty of thoſe two people.

49. (p. 323.) It is only over automata that deſpotiſm commands. There are no characters but in a free nation. The Engliſh have one; the Eaſtern nation have not: fear and ſervility ſtifles it among them.

50. (p. 324.) When a government prohibits writing on matters of adminiſtration, it makes a vow of blindneſs, and that vow is common enough: "As long as my finances are well regulated, and my army well diſciplined, ſaid a great prince, "let who will write againſt my diſcipline and my adminiſtration; but if I neglect either of theſe, who knows whether I "ſhould not have the weakneſs to compel ſuch writers to "ſilence."

51. (ibid.) When a man becomes a miniſter, it is no longer his time to form principles, but to apply them; carried away by the current of buſineſs, what he then learns is nothing

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more than details, always unknown to those that are not in place.

52. (p. 325.) To limit the press is to insult the nation: to prohibit the reading of certain books is to declare the inhabitants to be either fools or slaves: such a prohibition ought to fill them with disdain. But it will be said, it is almost always after the opinion of the powerful that a book is approved or condemned; yes, at the beginning: but this first judgment is nothing; it is the voice of prejudice for or against. The judgment truly interesting to an author is the judgment of the people, after reflection, which is almost always just.

53. (ibid.) The age at which men attain great places is frequently that when attention becomes the most irksome. At that age he who compels me to study is my enemy; I seek his punishment and wish his death. I can very well pardon a poet for his fine verses; I can read them without attention: but I cannot pardon a moralist for his acute reasonings; for the importance of the subject obliges me to reflect, and if he combats my prejudices, he wounds my pride, he robs me of my indolence, and forces me to think; now every constraint produces hatred.

54. (p. 326.) The land of despotism is fruitful in miseries as well as monsters. Despotism is the luxury of power, of no significance to the happiness of a sovereign. The very idea of this power would have made a Roman tremble. It is the terror of an Englishman. Judge Pratt says on this subject, "Let "us be cautious that the study of the Italian and the French "does not debase a free people."

What are in the eyes of the English the nobility of Europe? Men who join to the quality of slaves that of oppressors of the people: of citizens whom the law itself cannot protect against the man in place. A nobleman in Portugal is neither proprietor of his life, his estate, or his liberty: he is a domestic negro, who, flogged by the immediate order of his master, despises the negro flogged by order of the overseer of a plantation. This, in almost all the courts of Europe, is the only difference between the humble citizen and the haughty nobleman.

55. (ibid.) We must either creep, or keep at a distance from the court. He who cannot live but by its favours, must degrade his nature, or die of hunger. Few men prefer the latter.

56. (ibid.) The late king of Prussia being at supper with the English ambassador, asked him what he thought of mo-

narchs. "In general, he replied, I think them a worthleſs "race; they are ignorant, and debauched by flattery. The "only thing in which they ſucceed, is riding a horſe; and at "the ſame time, of all thoſe that approach them, the horſe is "the only one that does not flatter them; for he breaks their "neck if they do not govern him well."

57. (p. 327.) The more deſpotic a government is, and the more degraded the minds of the people are, the more they boaſt of a love for their tyrant. The ſlaves at Morocco bleſs their fate and their prince, at the very time he condeſcends to cut their throats with his own hands.

58. (ibid.) Sovereigns corrupted by flattery are ſpoiled children. Habituated to command over ſlaves, they frequently attempt to behave in the ſame manner to their equals, and are ſometimes puniſhed by the loſs of a part of their dominions. It was the chaſtiſement the Romans inflicted on Tigranes, Antiochus, &c. when thoſe tyrants dared to equal themſelves to a free people.

59. (p. 329.) When a man is rich he would be admired for his wealth; when he is of quality, he would be admired for his rank; when he is well made, for his figure. It is not difficult to praiſe: all have ſomething they think commendable.

60. (p. 331.) The man of genius thinks for himſelf; his opinions are ſometimes contrary to thoſe commonly received; he therefore ſhocks the vanity of the greater number. To offend nobody we ſhould have no ideas but thoſe of the world: a man is then without genius and without enemies.

61. (p. 336.) The Albigois were treated in the ſame manner as the Vaudois. The exceſs to which the rage of intolerance was carried againſt them is not to be conceived. The frightful picture of the barbarities exerciſed on the Vaudois is left us by Samuel Morland the Engliſh ambaſſador at Savoy, then reſident on the ſpot. "Never, ſays he, did Chriſtians "commit ſuch cruelties on Chriſtians: they cut off the heads of "the barbes, (the teachers of the people), boiled and eat them: "they cut open the bellies of the women, to the navel, with "flints; from others they cut off their breaſts, broiled and eat "them. They applied fire to the private parts of ſome; they "broke the limbs of others, and expoſed them to ſcorching "fires; from others they plucked off their nails with pincers: "they tied men, half dead, to the tails of horſes, and drew "them in that manner over rocks. The leaſt of their puniſh-

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" ments was to be thrown from a ſteep rock, from whence they " frequently fell among trees, to which they hung till they " periſhed by hunger, cold, and their wounds. They cut " ſome of them into a thouſand pieces, and ſtrewed their limbs " and fleſh about the country. They impaled the virgins by " their private parts, and carried them about like ſtandards. " Among others they drew a young man, named Pelanchion, " about the ſtreets of Lucerne, which are every where ſtrewed " with pointed flint ſtones; and if the pain made him lift up " his head or his hands, they were preſently beat down: they " at laſt cut off his ſecret parts, and by ſtuffing them into his " mouth, ſtrangled him; then cut off his head, and threw the " trunk into the river. The Catholics tore to pieces with " their hands the infants they ſnatched from the cradle. They " roaſted young girls alive, cut off their breaſts, and eat them. " From others they cut off the noſe, the ears, and other parts " of their bodies. They filled the mouth of ſome with gun- " powder, to which they ſet fire. They ſtead others alive, and " hung the ſkin before the windows of Lucerne. They beat " out the brains of others, which they roaſted or boiled, and " then eat. The leaſt puniſhments were to cut out their " hearts, to burn them alive, to diſfigure their faces, cut them " into a thouſand pieces, and then drown them. But they " ſhewed themſelves true Catholics, and worthy Romans, " when at Gareiglian they heated an oven, and forced eleven " Vaudois to throw each other into it, till the laſt, whom the " murderers threw in themſelves. Nothing was to be ſeen in " all the vallies but bodies dead or dying. The ſnow of the " Alps was ſtained with their blood. Here was ſeen a head, " there a trunk, legs, arms, bowels torn out, and a heart yet " beating."

For what pretended crime did they puniſh the Vaudois with ſo much barbarity? For that of rebellion, they ſaid. They were reproached with not having abandoned their dwellings and the place of their birth to the firſt order of Gaſtall and the pope; of not having exiled themſelves from a country they had poſſeſſed for 1500 years, and where they had always enjoyed the free exercie of their religious worſhip. It is thus the gentle Catholic religion, its gentle miniſters and ſaints have at all times treated mankind. What could the apoſtles of the devil do worſe?

(See (p. 376.)

62. (p. 336) No man can caſt a penetrative look on the various falſe religions, without conceiving the greateſt contempt for the human race in general, and for himſelf in particular. What! he will ſay, were thouſands of years neceſſary to convince men equally intelligent with myſelf of the folly of paganiſm? Do the Jews and the Guebres ſtill perſiſt in their errors! Do the Muſſulmans ſtill believe in Mahomet; and may it be thouſands of years before they are convinced of the falſity of the Koran! Man muſt certainly be a very weak and credulous animal, and in ſhort, this planet of ours muſt be, as a wiſe man ſaid, the mad-houſe of the univerſe.

63. (p. 337.) Why is the clergyman generally eſteemed in England? Becauſe he is tolerant: the laws tying his hands, and giving him no ſhare in adminiſtration. Becauſe he does not, and cannot injure any one; becauſe the maintenance of the Engliſh clergy is not ſo burthenſome to the ſtate as the Catholic clergy; and laſtly, becauſe in that country religion is properly nothing more than a philoſophical opinion.

64. (ibid.) What I ſay of zeal I ſay alſo of humility. Whatever ſect we may ſuppoſe a cardinal to be, he can never really think himſelf humble when he ſets himſelf up at Rome for the protector of ſuch a kingdom as France. True humility would refuſe ſo faſtuous a title. I do not mean however to deny the ſtupidity of ſome prelates; but their ambitious pretenſions prove leſs the ability of the clergy than the folly of the people. During my ſtay at Japan, ſaid a traveller to me, whenever I heard the words Donoo-Sury-Sama, that is to ſay, My Lord Crane, they forced me to think on the name of ſome biſhop.

65. (ibid.) Jeſus exerciſed no authority upon earth. If he had deſired that the ſacerdotal power ſhould command, he would have at firſt left that command with his apoſtles. Now their ſucceſſors have not yet ſhewn us their commiſſion, or title to ſuch a legacy.

66. (ibid.) The Saducees were regarded as the moſt virtuous among the Jews. The word *Sadoc* in Hebrew is ſynonimous to *juſt*. The Saducees therefore were, and ought to have been leſs hateful to God than the Phariſees: the latter demanded the death and the blood of Jeſus Chriſt. Now incredulity is, and ever will be, leſs contrary to the ſpirit of the Goſpel than inhumanity and deicide.

67. (p. 338.)

67. (p. 338.) To the disgrace of France, M. Rousseau has not been less persecuted at Paris than at Neufchatel. The Sorbonnists could not forgive him his dialogue of the Reasoner and the Inspired. That dialogue, they say, is too bold. What answer is there to this? but the reasonings of M. Rousseau are either true or false. To refute just reasons by violence is injustice; to refute bad reasons by the same method is folly; it is to confess stupidity; to injure our own cause. Sophisms refute themselves: the truth is easily defended.

Beside, what are the objections of M. Rousseau? Those that every bonze, dervis, and mandarin makes to the monk he would convert. Are those objections insoluble? What then do the monks in China? Why do they ask assistance, alms, and gratifications of princes, to defray the expence of a mission where they can make no converts? But the monks who travel over the East have no other object than to enrich themselves by commerce; they employ the treasures that have been lavished on them by the people to no other purpose than to deprive those very people of the profit of legitimate commerce. In this case what just reproaches have not the nations to make them? And what accusations can they bring against M. Rousseau? He has preached, they say, the religion of nature; but it is not contrary to the revealed. M. Rousseau has been honest in his criticisms; he was not the author of those infamous libels intitled, *Gazette Ecclesiastique*, yet he is banished, and the novelist is tolerated. Who then were thy judges, O illustrious Rousseau? Fanatics, who would, if it were in their power, blast the memory of Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus, and Trajan, and would accuse the greatest prince of Europe of his superior talents as a crime. What regard is to be had to such judgments? None. Let us appeal to posterity, and despise all those judgments that are not pronounced by reason and equity. Posterity will judge the judges, and if the most intolerant have not been the greatest knaves, they have at least been the greatest fools.

A butt for the cabals of priests, M. Rousseau is treated in this age as Abelard was in the twelfth by the monks of St. Denis. He denied that their founder was Denis the Areopagite mentioned in the New Testament. From that moment they declared him an enemy to the glory and crown of France: he was consequently defamed, persecuted, and proscribed by the saints of his century.

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Whoever oppoſes the pretenſions of a monk is an impious wretch. From hence the accuſations of blaſphemy and atheiſm are now become ſo puerile and ridiculous. I hope, for the honour of the human underſtanding, that the great men of the earth, the princes, miniſters, and magiſtrates will one day bluſh at having been the vile inſtruments of monachal rage and vengeance; they will fear to make exile and puniſhment honourable by the merit of thoſe on whom thoſe puniſhments are inflicted.

The Athenians, to ſecure their liberty, ſometimes baniſhed a too popular citizen: the fear of a maſter made them proſcribe a great man. The nations of Europe, ſecure from that danger, have not the ſame pretence for committing the ſame injuſtice.

68. (p. 339.) Caſſador thought like St. John. Religion, he ſaid, cannot be commanded. Force makes hypocrites, and not believers. *Religio imperari non poteſt, quia nemo cogitur ut credat.* Faith, ſays St. Bernard, ought to be perſuaded, not commanded: *fides ſuadenda, non imperanda.* Nothing is more voluntary, ſays Lactantius, than religion; it is nothing in him to whom it is repugnant. *Nihil eſt tam voluntariam quam religionem in qua ſe animus averſus eſt, jam ſublata, jam nulla eſt.* Nothing more contrary to religion, ſays Tertullian, than to endeavour to force belief; it is not by violence, but freely we muſt believe. *Non eſt religionis religionem cogere velle, cum ſponte ſuſcipi debeat, non vi.*

69. (p. 342.) The Pagans, they will ſay, believed in prieſts that were impoſtors. Be it ſo: but did that belief give them a right to perſecute? There are thouſands who believe in a mountebank, or an old woman, rather than a phyſician. Has the latter a right to demand the death of the infidels in medicine? In corporeal as well as ſpiritual maladies, every one ought to chooſe his own phyſician.

70. (ibid.) Frequently, ſays M. Lambert of Pruſſia in his *Novum Organum*, we think, believe we think, and believe more than we really think and believe. This is the ſource of a thouſand errors. If a man forbear, for example, to read prohibited books, he thinks he believes, and ſuſpects in ſecret the falſity of his belief: he is like a falſe pleader, who fears to read the defence of the adverſe party.

71. (ibid.) The pilots of the veſſels of ſuperſtition are ſkilful; as for the ſailors, the greateſt part of them are ignorant. The governing clergy require but little underſtanding in the

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clergy governed; and on this account we have nothing to reproach the latter. How does your brother the prieſt employ himſelf? ſomebody aſked Fontenelle: In the morning, replied the philoſopher, he ſays maſs, and in the evening he does not know what he ſays.

72. (p. 342.) Nothing can be more abſurdly ſubtle, ſay the Engliſh, than the arguments of the theologians, to prove to the ignorant Catholics the veracity of papiſm. Theſe arguments would do equally well to prove the truth of the Koran, that of the Thouſand and One Nights, or the tale of Mother Gooſe. To be convinced of this, let them apply to thoſe ſtories the ſophiſms and diſtinctions of the ſchools, and they will find nothing in them theologically incredible.

73. (p. 343.) Deſcartes, when perſecuted, quitted France, taking, like Æneas, his penates with him, that is, the eſteem and regret of men of ſagacity. The parliament, then Ariſtotelian, publiſhed an arret againſt the Carteſians: their doctrine was therein condemned: as has ſince been that of the Encyclopedia, l'Eſprit, and Emilius. There is nothing different in theſe arrets but their dates. Now the preſent parliaments laugh at the former; future parliaments will laugh at the preſent.

74. (ibid.) See the apology by Naudé, for great men accuſed of magic. The author there thinks himſelf obliged to prove that Homer, Virgil, Zoroaſter, Orpheus, Democritus, Solomon, pope Sylveſter, Empedocles, Apollonius, Agrippa, Albert le Grand, Paracelſus, &c. never were ſorcerers.

75. (ibid.) The theologians have ſo much abuſed the word *materialiſt*, of which they have never been able to give a clear idea, that the term at laſt became ſynonimous to a clear underſtanding. They now mean by that word thoſe celebrated writers whoſe works are read with avidity.

76. (p. 344.) With what odious imputations have not the Catholics loaded the Proteſtants? What tricks have not the monks employed to irritate princes againſt their faithful ſubjects! What art to make them appear no other than rebels, who with rage in their hearts, and arms in their hands, are ever ready to aſcale the throne! Such, O monks, is your juſtice and your charity! On what do you found your calumnies? Which of the churches, the Roman or the Proteſtant, has the moſt frequently arrogated the right of dethroning kings, and depriving them at once of ſceptre and life? and which has moſt frequently put it in practice? If we examine hiſtory, and calculate the number

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and kind of attempts made by one and the other, the queſtion will ſoon be decided.

The reformed, they will ſay, have made war on princes. No: but princes have made war on them. When I am unjuſtly attacked, defence is a law of nature, and numerous perſecutors always avail themſelves of this law. It is by irritating the ſovereign againſt his faithful ſubjects, that the monks put arms into the hands of the reformed. All the different ſects of Chriſtians are at this day tolerated in Holland, England, and Germany; and what troubles do they there excite? Peace is eſtabliſhed in that empire on the plan of toleration, and doubtleſs will remain there as long as the government ſhall reſtrain the ambition of the eccleſiaſtics.

To conclude; if, as I have already ſaid, governments take no part in theologic quarrels, the people will regard them as matters of no more importance than the diſputes about the ancient and modern writers.

77. (p. 345.) Who has not laughed to ſee the Jeſuits ſo often accuſe the parliaments of revolt, and cite them before the king, as a ſcholar before his preceptor? France, they then ſaid, is a nation of ſlaves, where each one accuſes the other of ſedition.

78. (p. 346.) The monks are employed inceſſantly in ſearching the ſcriptures for paſſages whoſe interpretation may be favourable to intolerance; but who does not know that though the ſcriptures are of God, the interpretations are of men.

79. (p. 347.) The warrior, frank and brave, is commonly humane; his freedom and courage ſet him above all fear. The prieſt, on the contrary, is cruel. Why? Becauſe he is weak, falſe, and cowardly. Now of all creatures, ſays Montaigne, if women be the moſt cruel, it is becauſe in general they are weak and deſtitute of courage. *Cruelty is always the effect of fear, weakneſs, and cowardice.*

80. (p. 348.) Nothing is more indeterminate than the ſignification of the word *impious*, to which is annexed a vague, confuſed idea of villainy. Do they by this word mean an atheiſt, and apply it to one who has only obſcure ideas of the Deity? In this ſenſe all men are atheiſts; for no one can comprehend incomprehenſibility. Do they apply it to thoſe who call themſelves materialiſts? But if we have not yet any clear, adequate ideas of matter, we can have no clear idea of the impiety of materialiſm. Are we to regard as atheiſts thoſe who have not

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the ſame idea of God as the Catholics? We muſt then call by this name the pagans, heretics, and infidels. Now in the laſt ſenſe atheiſt is not a ſynonimous term with villain; it ſignifies a man who on certain metaphyſical or theological points does not think with the monk and the Sorbonne. That the word atheiſm or impiety may recal to the mind ſome idea of villainy, to whom ſhould it be applied? To perſecutors.

81. (p. 349.) It is not to be imagined to what a degree intolerance has of late years carried idotiſm in France. A man of ſenſe informed me that during the laſt war a hundred idiots, when with their confeſſors, accuſed the Encyclopediſts of the derangement in the finances; and God knows if any one of them ever had the leaſt hand in their adminiſtration. Others reproached the philoſophers with the little love for glory in our generals; and at that time theſe ſame philoſophers were expoſed to a perſecution, that nothing but the love of glory and the public welfare could ſupport. Others again attributed to the publication of the Encyclopedia, and the progreſs of the philoſophic ſpirit, the defeats of the French armies; yet it was then that the very philoſophic king of Pruſſia, and the very philoſophic people of England, every where defeated thoſe armies. Philoſophy was the ſpright in the ſtory that did all the miſchief.

Yet, ſaid a great prince on this ſubject, every people who baniſh philoſophy and good ſenſe from among them, cannot promiſe themſelves either great ſucceſs in war, or a ſpeedy re-eſtabliſhment in peace.

In Portugal there are few philoſophers to be found; and perhaps the weakneſs of the ſtate is there in proportion to the fotiſm and ſuperſtition of the people.

82. (p. 350.) Without the aid of the Catholic princes the Papiſts, as ſtupid, and perhaps more intolerant than the Jews, would fall into the ſame contempt.

83. (p. 351.) Intolerance was never greater in France: perhaps they would not now print, without caſtrations, M. Fleury's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, nor permit the impreſſion of Fontaine's Fables. What impiety might they not find in theſe lines of the ſculptor and the ſtatue of Jupiter*?

* *The poet formerly owed but little to the weakneſs of the ſculptor, who dreaded the wrath and hatred of the gods of his own making; for in this he was a child, and children are ſolely concerned that their dolls be not offended.*

84. (p. 353.) All things in us, even to ſelf-love, is acquiſition; we learn to love ourſelves, to be humane or inhuman, virtuous or vicious. The moral man is all education and imitation.

85. (ibid.) Our various characters are the produce of our factitious paſſions; that they are not the effect of organiſation or particular temperament is evident by their being attached to certain profeſſions: ſuch, according to M. Hume, is that of a ſoldier, and that of a miniſter of the altar, which are nearly the ſame in all ages, countries, and religions.

86. (p. 354.) The love of glory elevates a man above himſelf; it extends the faculties of the mind and ſoul: but he who regards that paſſion as the effect of a particular organiſation deceives himſelf. The deſire of glory is a paſſion ſo truly factitious and dependent on the form of government, that the legiſlature can always at its pleaſure kindle or extinguiſh it in a nation.

87. (p. 356.) There is no art or ſcience that has not its particular language: and it is the ſtudy of this language that at an advanced age renders us incapable of the ſtudy of a new ſcience.

88. (p. 360.) There are in every country a certain number of objects, that education offers equally to all; and it is the uniform impreſſion of thoſe objects that produces in the inhabitants that reſemblance of ideas and ſentiments to which we give the name of the ſpirit and character of the nation.

There is beſide, a certain number of different objects that chance and education preſent to each individual, and it is the different impreſſions of theſe objects which produces in the ſame individuals that diverſity of ideas and ſentiments to which we give the name of particular ſpirit and character.

89. (ibid.) I ſuppoſe a man cannot make himſelf illuſtrious in letters without dividing his time between the world and retirement; that it is in the deſert he muſt pick up diamonds, and in the world cut, poliſh, and ſet them: it is evident that chance and fortune, which have permitted me to live by turns in the city and in the country, have done more for me than ſome others.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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